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The minister of baptism

THE

MINISTER OF BAPTISM


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THE
MINISTER OF BAPTISM

A HISTORY OF CHURCH OPINION FROM THE
TIME OF THE APOSTLES : ESPECIALLY WITH
REFERENCE TO HERETICAL, SCHISMATICAL
AND LAY ADMINISTRATION

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LONDON
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PREFACE

THE ministry of baptism has had a history of its own, apart from that of the apostolic ministry as a whole. From very early times disputes have arisen as to who can validly baptize, to an extent quite unknown in reference to any other sacramental ordinance. The subject has been discussed under a variety of aspects; it has occasioned some considerable controversies; and, as opinions still widely differ, it will probably occasion more before any universal agreement is reached in the Church.

The matter is certainly important enough to demand serious consideration, and one design of the present volume is to invite more earnest attention to it than it commonly receives. The majority of English clergy, who are responsible for guarding the due administration of the sacraments within their several spheres, now generally pass it by without much regard.

A second design is to summarise the historical evidence on the question. No opinion on it can be

really intelligent which is not formed in the light of the views of former times and other parts of Christendom, because its present position is the outcome of earlier influences. As a rule the information given regarding it in ordinary text books of theology is somewhat meagre. No doubt a few special treatises already exist, and are fairly accessible, even though some of them are out of print. But being generally polemical, they give undue prominence to one or other side of the evidence, while in no case are they historically complete. The patristic and modern English literature on the point has been tolerably well considered, but there has been a comparative neglect of mediæval testimony, and of that of the Eastern Churches. Both of these afford very important contributions to the inquiry. I have tried to do justice to the whole range of information, so far as I have been able to collect it, and thus to provide a handbook on the Minister of Baptism which I trust will be found useful, at any rate for purposes of reference.

The Rev. E. C. Baldwin, now Vicar of Harston, Cambridgeshire, was the first to draw my particular attention to the difficulties involved in the acceptance of baptism administered by laymen, especially by dissenters. The chief results of my own study of the matter were embodied in an article on 'Lay Baptism,' contributed to the *Church Quarterly Review* for October, 1887. There I should have been more than content to

have left the subject, had it not been for pressing suggestions from the Bishop of Argyll and the Isles that I should prepare the essay for separate publication. It seemed to me that the only way in which I could remodel it, so as to be of any real service, would be by expanding it into a history of the whole question. For this I felt that I had neither sufficient leisure nor knowledge at hand, even if a technical volume could be expected to interest any sufficient number of readers, and I therefore hesitated much before I undertook the task. Others will be able to judge how far I have succeeded. That I have escaped all omissions and mistakes, in dealing with so wide and scattered a mass of materials, is more than I can expect; but I believe that the book will be found fairly complete and substantially reliable.

My obligations to previous writers will be best indicated by saying that without the chief of them I could not have undertaken the work at all. I am also indebted to the ready courtesy of both strangers and friends for several very useful items of information which I could not otherwise have obtained. These I have acknowledged in footnotes to the pages where they occur. My more special thanks are due to the Bishop of Argyll and to Mr. Baldwin for help of a larger kind. With an ungrudging expenditure of time and trouble, they have given me the benefit of constant advice and criticism throughout, rendered particularly

valuable by the fact that they have both been independent students of the subject.

I ought, perhaps, to add that I hold myself alone responsible for the book as it stands, with its opinions and conclusions. As regards these, seeing that they concern the administration of one of the great sacraments of the Gospel, it is something more than the adoption of a customary formula, if I say that I propose them in entire submission to the judgment of the Church.

BECKENHAM : *September, 1889.*

CONTENTS



CHAPTER I.

THE ONE BAPTISM.

	PAGE
The unity of baptism	1
Questions as to its minister	2
Importance of the subject	3
The saying, <i>Fieri non debet, factum valet</i>	4
The Church's authority to regulate the ministration	6
Differences of opinion	7
The present essay historical	9
Suggestion for conditional baptism	11

CHAPTER II.

THE BAPTISMAL COMMISSION.

The apostolic ministry :	
Recipients of the commission	12
Representative view of the ministry	14
Difference between clerical and lay priesthood	15
Sacramental character of baptism	16
Terms of the commission :	
Exclusive as to the authority to baptize	16
Authority with the persons, not with the act	17
Parallel with teaching	18
Comparison with power of the keys	20
The plea of necessity	22
Condition of the unbaptized	22
Application to other sacraments	24
Presumption against unauthorised baptism	26

CHAPTER III.

THE SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE.

	PAGE
Analogy of Jewish types :	
Circumcision	27
Its minister in the Bible	27
Its minister in rabbinical tradition	28
Failure of parallel with baptism	29
Jewish Baptism :—	
Its analogy with Christian baptism	30
Its minister	31
Baptism by St. John the Baptist	32
Failure of the parallel	33
The New Testament evidence	33
Baptisms on the Day of Pentecost	34
Baptisms by St. Philip	35
Ananias and baptism of Saul	36
Baptism of Cornelius	36
Baptisms by St. Paul	37
Supplementary conjectures	38

CHAPTER IV.

THE EARLY CHURCH.—CENT. II, III.

St. Ignatius	40
Reservation of baptism to bishops	41
Tertullian :	
On lay baptism	41
On baptism by women	44
On heretical baptism	45
St. Clement of Alexandria	46
The Apostolical Canons	46
On heretical baptism	48
The Apostolical Constitutions	50
On heretical baptism	51
On lay and female baptism	51
On baptism by deacons	52
Value of the evidence	53

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRST CONTROVERSY.—CENT. III.

Eastern councils on heretical baptism :	
Iconium	54
Synnada	55

	PAGE
African usage on heretical baptism :	
Its ' custom of error '	55
Council of Carthage, under Agrippinus	55
Disputes between Pope Stephen and the Eastern bishops	57
St. Cyprian's controversy on heretical baptism :	
Cyprian to Magnus	57
Fifth Council of Carthage under Cyprian, and epistle to the Numidian bishops	58
Cyprian to Quintus	59
Sixth Council of Carthage under Cyprian, and epistle to Pope Stephen	59
Pope Stephen's resentment	59
Cyprian to Pompey	60
Cyprian to Jubaianus	61
Seventh Council of Carthage under Cyprian	61
Firmilian to Cyprian	63
Subsequent relations between Rome and Africa :	
Dionysius and Pope Stephen	63
Dionysius and Pope Xystus	63
African opinion remained unchanged	64
The Eastern and African arguments :	
The one baptism	65
Regeneration only in the Church	65
Pardon only in the Church	66
Parallel with other sacraments	66
Indulgence to errors through ignorance	67
Bearing on schismatical and lay baptism	68
The view of Pope Stephen	70
Estimate of the controversy	71

CHAPTER VI.

THE GREAT COUNCILS AND FATHERS.—CENT. IV.

Ministry of baptism by the clergy :	
Bishops and priests	75
Deacons	76
Heretical baptism in the East :	
Councils—	
Nicæa, 325	77
Laodicea, 375	78
Constantinople, 381	78
Ground of the decrees	79

	PAGE
Writers—	
St. Basil	81
St. Cyril of Jerusalem	84
Didymus of Alexandria	84
St. Athanasius	84
St. Epiphanius	86
Lay baptism in the East :	
Writers—	
St. Basil	86
St. Epiphanius	87
St. Gregory Nazianzen	87
Story of St. Athanasius	87
Bingham's view of the eighth Nicene Canon	89
Heretical baptism in the West :	
The Roman practice	90
Councils—	
Arles I., 314.	91
Carthage I., 348	92
Writers—	
Pope Siricius	92
St. Ambrose	93
St. Optatus	93
St. Pacian	93
Lay baptism in the West :	
Councils—	
Elvira, 324	94
Carthage IV., 398	94
Writers—	
Pseudo-Ambrose	95
St. Pacian	95
St. Optatus	96
St. Jerome	97
St. Augustine	98
On heretical baptism	99
Sacraments remain outside unity of Church	100
Christ the Baptizer	102
Permanence of holy orders	104
Baptism unprofitable in schism	105
Except in extreme necessity	107
On baptism by lay churchmen	108
On baptism in a play or in jest	109
On baptism by the unbaptized	110
Epistle to Fortunatus	110
Summary	110

CHAPTER VII.

THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES.—CENT. V—VIII.

	PAGE
The Middle Ages	112
The ministers of public baptism :	
Bishops	112
Priests	113
Deacons	114
Heretical baptism in the East :	
Timotheus Presbyter	115
Council in Trullo, 691	116
St. John Damascene	117
Theodore Studites	117
Lay baptism in the East :	
John Moscus	117
Council in Trullo, 691	118
Heretical baptism in the West :	
Second Council of Arles, 452	119
Popes—	
Innocent I.	120
St. Leo	120
St. Gregory the Great	121
Gregory II.	121
Zachary	121
Writers—	
Gennadius	122
Fulgentius Ferrandus	122
St. Gregory of Tours	122
St. Isidore	122
Venerable Bede	122
Canons of St. Patrick	123
Lay baptism in the West :	
Gelasius, St. Isidore, Hildefonsus	124
In England—	
Archbishop Theodore	124
Archbishop Egbert	125
Baptism by the unbaptized	126
Pagan baptism	127

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LATER MIDDLE AGES.—CENT. IX—XV.

Heretical baptism in the East	129
Nicetas Chroniates	129

	PAGE
Synod at Constantinople, 1166	130
Matthew Blastar	130
Greek treatment of Western baptism	130
Lay baptism in the East :	
Canons of Nicephorus	133
Georgius Hamartolus	134
Michael Glycas	135
Synod at Constantinople, 1166	135
Theodore Scutariota	136
Matthew Blastar	136
Simon of Thessalonica	136
Nicephorus the historian	136
Western regular baptism :	
Bishops and priests	137
Deacons	139
Western opinion on lay and heretical baptism	141
Popes Nicholas I., John VIII., Urban II.	142
Theologians, Canonists, and Schoolmen—	
Ivo, Alger	142
Rupert, Honorius, Hugo of St. Victor	143
The Decretum of Gratian	143
St. Bernard	144
Baudinus and Peter Lombard	144
St. Raymond of Peñafort	145
Henricus de Segusio (Hostiensis)	146
St. Thomas Aquinas	147
Duns Scotus	147
De Burgo	148
Lyndwood	148
Councils	150
Foreign councils, 13th to 15th centuries	151
John of Ragusa and Council of Basle, 1433	152
Pope Eugenius IV. and Council of Florence, 1439	153
England—	
Lanfranc	154
Councils, 13th and 14th centuries	154
Archbishop Peckham's Constitutions	155
The Sarum Manual	156
Mirk's Instructions to Parish Priests	157
Summary of mediæval evidence	159

Note to Chapter VIII.

Mediæval Canons on baptism by deacons and laity	161
---	-----

CHAPTER IX.

THE REFORMATION.—CENT. XVI.

	PAGE
Foreign Reformers :	
Zuinglius and his followers	171
Calvin	172
Council of Trent and its Catechism	173
England :	
The protestant Reformers	175
Tyndale	175
Puritan protests against lay baptism	176
Cranmer and others	176
First English Prayer Books	177
Intention of the compilers	178
Unreformed practice in Queen Mary's reign	179
Bonner	179
Pole	180
Scotland :	
Unreformed practice	180
Scotch protestants	181
Knox's Liturgy	182
Protestant Sects :	
The Presbyterians : The Directory	183
Reformed Church of France	183
English controversies :	
Baptism by midwives	185
Correspondence with Bullinger and others	186
Convocation—	
Petitions in 1562	188
Articles of 1575	189
Literary controversies	190
Cartwright and Whitgift	191
Hooker	194
Abbott	196
The Universities	197
Perkins	198

CHAPTER X.

THE POST-REFORMATION PERIOD.—CENT. XVII.

Heretical baptism in the East :

The Greek Church—

Jeremiah II. on Western baptism	199
Dositheos on heretical and Western baptism	200
The Russian Church on Western baptism	201

	PAGE
Lay baptism in the East :	
Popular opinion against it	201
Decisions of authorities in its favour—	
Jeremiah II. and Lutherans	202
Confessions of faith	203
Dositheos	203
Gabriel Severus	204
The 'heretical' Churches of East	204
Roman practice on heretical and lay baptism	205
The 'Ritual'	205
Cardinal Bellarmine	207
Lay baptism in England :	
James I.	208
Hampton Court Conference	209
The revision of the Prayer Book	211
'Lawful minister'	211
The baptismal inquiries	212
Rubric on conditional baptism	214
Office for reception	215
Motive of the changes	215
The Preface to Ordinal and the 23rd Article	216
Prayer Book of 1661—	
Change in title of Office for private baptism	217
Office for adult baptism	217
Regulation of baptism by deacon	218
Desuetude of baptism by laity	218
Opinions of English divines :	
Sanderson	219
Ussher	219
Comber	219
Taylor	220
Wilson	221
Casaubon	221
Cosin	221
Thorndike	221
Sparrow	222
Bramhall	223

CHAPTER XI.

DISSENTERS' BAPTISM.—CENT. XVIII—XIX.

Character of dissenters' baptism	224
Protest in Convocation, 1703	225
The nonjuring controversy :	
Dodwell	226
Leslie	227

	PAGE
Laurence	227
' Lay Baptism Invalid '	229
Attacks by Bishops Burnet, Fleetwood, and Talbot	230
Laurence's Replies	230
Hickes, Brett, Bennet, &c.	231
Bingham's defence of lay baptism	231
Manifesto of bishops, and discussion in Convocation, 1712	232
Earl of Oxford's suggestion for a Queen's letter	235
Practical actions—	
Case at Exeter: Bishop Blackall	235
Case at Manchester: Pamphlets	236
Refusal of burial office at Derby: Pamphlet	236
Further Essays by Laurence, Brett and Bingham	236
Laurence's promotions	237
Letters of Waterland and Kelsall	238
Deacon's Devotions	240
Later treatment of dissenters' baptism:	
Wesley and Bishop Potter	241
Mr. Castleman: Pamphlets	241
Bishop Warburton	241
Society for conversion of negroes	242
Ordinary practice at end of 18th century	242
Scotland: opinion allied with nonjurors	242
Baptism by lay catechists	243
Case of Mr. Lauder at Muthill	243
Rejection of Presbyterian baptism	244
Catechisms—	
Short Explanation of Catechism, 1712	244
Bishop Petrie's Catechism	245
Bishop Skinner's Catechism	245
Rebaptism of Presbyterians—	
Bishop R. Forbes' Journal	247
Scotch Registers	248
Rev. A. Lendrum	249
The Burial Cases:	
Case at Gloucester, 18th century	250
Kemp <i>v.</i> Wickes	250
Attacks on the judgment	251
Pamphlets by Archdeacon Daubeny and Bishop Burgess	252
The judgment ignored	253
Case at Exeter	254
Mastin <i>v.</i> Escott	254
Opinions of counsel	254
Sir H. Jenner's judgment	255
Appeal to Privy Council: Lord Brougham's judgment	255

	PAGE
Bishop Phillpotts' Charge	256
Titchmarsh v. Chapman	256
Bearing of Cases on minister of baptism	257

Notes to Chapter XI.

A. Publications on the controversy of the eighteenth century	258
B. Publications, chiefly on the Burial Cases	263

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHURCH OF THE PRESENT DAY.

The Greek Church :	
Western baptism—	
Reversion to stricter rule on triple immersion	265
Custom of rejecting Western baptism	266
Dependent on form not on heresy	267
Lay baptism—	
The permission of formularies	268
Its strict interpretation	268
The Russian Church :	
Western baptism	270
Lay baptism	270
The Roman Church :	
Treatment of baptism outside its own communion	271
The English Church :	
Lay Church baptism—	
Unusual in England	272
Use in colonies	273
Dissenters' baptism—	
Current acceptance	275
Bishop Alexander Forbes	275
Canon Liddon	277
Blunt and Phillimore	278
The Church Times	278
Adverse opinions	279
The American Church :	
Lay Baptism—	
The American Office	279
Resolution of American bishops	280
Dissenters' baptism—	
Rebaptism of bishops, clergy and others	280
Bishop Whipple, of Minnesota	281
General opinion in America	282

	PAGE
The Scotch Church :	
Canon on Presbyterian baptism—	
Of 1838	283
Revision in 1863	284
Practice and opinions—	
Bishop Terrot and Bishop Dowden on its validity	285
Bishop Chinnery-Haldane's opinion and rule	286
Position of the controversy	288

CHAPTER XIII.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS.

Varieties of opinion and practice	290
Absence of explicit direction in English Church	291
The remedies for irregular baptism :	
Rebaptism	292
Confession of faith	292
Penance and imposition of hands	293
Uction	294
Confirmation	295
Conditional baptism	296
Cases of irregularity as to ministers of baptism :	
The clergy—	
Bishops and priests	298
Deacons	299
Heretics and schismatics	299
Lay churchmen—	
Argument of reason	300
Church usage	301
Duty to dying persons	302
Duty in colonies, &c.	304
Women	304
Heathen and unbaptized	305
Dissenters—	
Reasons for grave irregularity	306
Consequent doubts as to validity	308
Cases of unremedied validity :	
Bishops and clergy baptized by dissenters	312
Theories propounded—	
Ordination of the unbaptized	313
Communion of the unbaptized	313
The mercy of God supplying lack	314
Remedies for dissenters' baptism :	
Obligation for honour of God	316
Confirmation	317

	PAGE
Rites of reconciliation	319
Conditional baptism	320
Opinion of Dr. Pusey	321
Opinion of Bishop Wordsworth of Lincoln	321
Appropriateness to present position of the question in the Church	322
INDEX	325

Errata.

Page 39 footnote, *for* Philalethus *read* Philalethes.

Page 89 footnote, for *Judgment of Church of England* read *Inquiry into practice of Primitive Church.*

THE MINISTER OF BAPTISM

CHAPTER I.

THE ONE BAPTISM.

The unity of baptism—Questions as to its minister—Importance of the subject—The saying, ‘Fieri non debet, factum valet’—The Church’s authority to regulate its ministration—Differences of opinion—The present essay historical—Practical result of the inquiry.

THE Bible and the Church both affirm the unity of baptism. ‘There is one baptism,’ says Holy Scripture.¹ ‘I acknowledge one baptism,’ says the Nicene Creed.

These expressions do not simply mean that baptism cannot be reiterated. This is clear in each case from the context. The oneness of baptism is parallel with the oneness of God, with the oneness of the faith, with the oneness of the Church. The assertion therefore implies conditions of unity. The one faith is not any kind of faith formulated by a believer for himself, but ‘the faith which was once delivered to the saints;’² and the one Church is not any sort of religious society organised by human intelligence, but the one mystical ‘body’ espoused by Christ to Himself, of which He is the Head and the Saviour.³ So likewise the one baptism is not any rite of ablution to which men may please to attach

¹ Eph. iv. 5.

² Jude 3.

³ Eph. v. 23–32.

the title, but that one baptism instituted by our Lord Himself, wherein 'by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.'⁴

Upon some of the limitations required by the unity of baptism there is complete consent within the catholic Church. It is universally agreed that the only matter with which it can be administered is water, and that the formula of its administration must include the naming of the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity. On these points the Church recognises no doubt. They are absolute essentials of the one true baptism.

There is not the same unanimity as to the minister of baptism. That the ordinary and proper minister is a bishop or a priest there is no dispute within the Church, whatever may be the opinion of sectarians without. Controversy only begins when it is inquired whether the sacerdotal qualification is so necessary that no other baptism can under any circumstances be accounted valid; and whether this qualification is so sufficient of itself that every baptism by a real priest must certainly hold good under every possible condition. Questions arise as to whether a deacon has authority to baptize; as to whether heresy or schism have any effect in annulling the power of a priest; as to whether the permission to baptize can ever be extended to laymen or to women; and as to whether even those who are themselves unbaptized or heathen can baptize others. None of these are mere speculative propositions for curious discussion. They have all occurred in practical forms from time to time within the Church, and sometimes in combinations which have very much added to the difficulty of answering them.

⁴ 1 Cor. xii. 13.

It cannot be said that the subject is unimportant. Baptism is 'generally necessary to salvation.' 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'⁵ If, then, it is necessary, and if it is also 'one,' it is of the utmost consequence that there should be no room for doubt as to whether a person has really received the one true baptism or not. The minister's commission is not a matter of indifference in other sacraments, and may not be in this. Any radical flaw may endanger the efficacy of a sacrament, so as to destroy or impair the privileges attached to it. It is of vital importance to know whether a fault in the qualifications of the minister of baptism constitutes such a radical flaw in its administration.

The question is of exceptional interest to the Anglican communion of the present day. Owing to the frequency with which the unordained preachers of modern dissenting sects assume that they have the right to baptize, the Churches of England, Scotland, and America have to deal with irregularities of administration to a greater extent probably than has ever been the case before, unless it was in the third century, when the dispute was upon the validity of baptism by heretics. The consideration is the more important because there are no exact precedents to go upon. The heretical baptisms of the early centuries were by renegade clergy who had at least been validly ordained. The lay baptisms of the middle ages were usually by communicant members of the Church. Even, then, if ancient and mediæval opinion had unanimously endorsed these irregularities of administration, which it did not, it would but contribute towards the decision of the question as it comes

⁵ John iii. 5.

practically before us. The whole matter needs thinking out anew in its relation to dissent. And now that the Anglican communion is reasserting before the people its true position in the kingdom of God, and by renewed energy is calling back to the fold the children whom she had lost, the subject pressingly demands attention. It is of the gravest consequence to ascertain the value of the rites which candidates for reconciliation adduce as their credentials of membership in Christ. The clergy especially need to know accurately what they can say with confidence to those who have scruples about the validity of the washing they have received from unauthorised hands, and what they ought to say to those who have none.

Yet comparatively few seem to regard the subject as of any practical moment. Those in modern times who have called attention to it have, for the most part, obtained a hearing with difficulty, and have been regarded by not a few in the light of fanatical enthusiasts. The popular impression among churchmen appears to be that, though baptism ought not to be administered by those who have no proper commission, yet, when uncommissioned persons attempt to administer it, the deed is just as good as the baptism of an accredited priest. And so the question is lightly brushed aside with the familiar saying, *Fieri non debet, factum valet*, as though this was a conclusive answer to all doubts that could be raised.

So constantly does this phrase recur in the English essays on the minister of baptism, that it is important to consider what it is worth in the discussion. As a terse and epigrammatic way of summing up a conclusion, the sentence may serve excellently. But it needs

to be remembered that it is in no sense itself an argument, and that it only holds as to certain things. As Waterland, among others, has pointed out, 'the maxim is true only of errors in circumstantials, not of errors in essentials.' He illustrates this by the instances of a performance of marriage rites between a brother and sister, or the levying of soldiers by one who has no commission to act in the Queen's name. 'Here,' he says, 'all would be null and void, and the maxim would be false and impertinent.'⁶ To use it with reference to an irregular ministration of baptism is to assume what needs to be proved, for the question is whether anything at all has been done by the unauthorised baptismal ceremony, not whether when baptism has really been given it shall be accounted valid. There are, of course, some things which, being done illegally, nevertheless cannot, as a matter of fact, be rendered null, because they produce a physical and external effect which is unalterable. These must perforce be acknowledged after a fashion. But this is not the case with baptism, where the visible sign produces no visible effect, and the invisible grace depends upon the act of God, who is only pledged to ratify the outward sign when its proper conditions are observed. There is no physical difficulty in repeating the form of baptism any number of times upon the same person. But, since he can only be baptized once, all but one of these ceremonies would be empty forms. The sole question would be which of the several ablutions had been the real baptism. The first, if it were by an unqualified ministrant, might, apart from proof to the contrary, be as little the one true baptism as a subse-

⁶ Waterland, *Letter on Lay Baptism*, Works, ed. 1843, vol. vi. p. 77.

quent process of baptizing would be to a person who had already been actually baptized. In the latter case the sentence, *Fieri non debet, factum valet*, would have no place. So, in like manner, it has no place as to unauthorised ministers of baptism, until it has been proved that they can baptize. The phrase does not belong to argument, and it is best banished altogether from a discussion where it is liable to mislead by the speciousness of its sound.

The real evidence on the question must be sought in the terms of the commission by which our Lord enjoined holy baptism, and in the interpretation of that commission by the Church. The promise of our Lord is, 'Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'⁷ By this declaration He has been pleased to bind Himself to confirm the decisions of the Church. These, in their fullest form of universal consent, we believe to be the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, and so perfectly to express the will of God. There are certain things upon which the divine seal having thus been finally set, they are no longer open to discussion. There are other things upon which the voice of the Spirit has not spoken so decisively. Here the custom and opinion of a part of Christendom, or of the Church in any particular age, is a sufficient warrant for our Lord's ratification of acts, performed faithfully in accordance with the discipline of the place or time, so far at least as is necessary for individual grace. The practice in such cases may possibly not be uniform. What is valid in one locality or in one period may not be so in another: and a temporary or partial ruling may

⁷ Matt. xvi. 19.

be open to a larger or a subsequent revision. God, who is tied to no arbitrary limitations for the exercise of His almighty power, doubtless adapts His own administrations to whatever efforts are made to carry out His will, so long as they do not violate a catholic law.

Among such uncertain points must be placed the question of the essential qualifications of the minister of baptism. Great divergence of practice and opinion upon this can be traced in the history of the Church; and no universal consent either of canon or of custom can be pointed out as finally and conclusively laying down an accurately defined rule. That a matter of such importance should be open to any doubt at all may seem surprising, till it is remembered that it by no means stands alone. The Church is not entirely at one upon many points connected with the sacraments. East and West at present differ on the subject of immersion, on the age of confirmation, and the use of infant communion. Nor is there complete agreement as to every matter belonging to the discipline of penance and the celebration of the holy eucharist. If these are not exactly parallel to the question of the ministrant of baptism, some of them are at least of sufficient gravity to reconcile one to the possibility of entertaining the latter as open to a difference of opinion. So fully was this felt by St. Cyprian and St. Augustine, the two greatest advocates who have entered the lists on opposite sides in the controversy, that, while holding strong views themselves upon some of its aspects, they both expressed themselves as ready to tolerate opinions which did not coincide with their own, within the limits of what they believed the Church not to have deter-

mined by a unanimous judgment. ‘In this matter,’ says St. Cyprian, ‘we neither do violence to any, nor lay down a law, since each prelate hath, in the government of the Church, his own choice and free will, hereafter to give account of his conduct to the Lord.’⁸ And St. Augustine writes : ‘The safe course for us is not to advance with any rashness of judgment in setting forth a view which has neither been started in any provincial council of the catholic Church, nor established in a general one ; but to assert, with all the confidence of a voice that cannot be gainsaid, what has been confirmed by the consent of the whole Church, under the direction of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ.’⁹ St. Augustine would have extended his hesitation to some cases upon which he spoke with confidence, had he not erroneously attributed œcumenical authority to a provincial council of Arles.¹

It will not, however, follow that, because the Church has not finally decided some doubtful points, the whole question is to be treated with indifference. The consent may be so general on some cases of ministerial qualification or disqualification that the debatable ground may be narrowed, while the current of evidence may be so strong on others as to give a probability akin to certainty. And where some degree of uncertainty remains, it may be possible to devise means whereby doubts may be satisfactorily met, without running the risk either of attempting to iterate a real baptism, or of leaving a person in the peril of an invalid baptism, which is no baptism at all. Such cases must be dealt with on some intelligible principle. The time may not

⁸ Cyprian, *Ep.* lxxii. [lxxi.] 3.

⁹ Aug. *De Bapt.* vii. liii. 102.

¹ See *post*, p. 100.

be ripe for a dogmatic decision, but they must not be altogether left to the haphazard chance of righting themselves.

Whenever the subject has come into prominence, there have been two parties in the debate, one inclined to rigidity, the other to laxity. At first the rigid tendency was in the ascendant, as it still is in great measure in the East. The laxer opinion grew by degrees in the West, guarded by restrictions, and never perhaps entirely unchallenged, but attaining at length to very considerable proportions. It is this Western view which we in England inherit, stripped as a rule of all its limiting cautions, until it seems often to be assumed almost as a matter of course that baptism by any person whomsoever, under any circumstances whatsoever, is exactly the same as baptism, under the rule of the Church, by a duly ordained priest. 'I confess,' said Bishop Jeremy Taylor, in the 17th century, while speaking of the laxer doctrine, 'the opinion hath been very generally taken up in these last ages of the Church, and almost with a nemine contradicente; the first ages had more variety of opinion; and I think it may yet be considered anew upon the old stock.'²

To consider it anew upon the old stock is the object of the present essay. Most of the modern treatises upon the subject have been written in controversy, to enforce exclusively either the free or the rigid interpretation of the baptismal commission. The chief items of evidence may no doubt be gathered from these, if leading works on the opposite sides are combined. The evidence has been collected with assiduity, has been pressed with earnestness and often with ability, yet

² *Office Ministerial*, iv. 5, *Taylor's Works*, ed. 1839, vol. xiv. p. 445.

sometimes not without bias. The present contribution to the discussion is intended to be historical rather than polemical. In some respects this may seem to lead to less decisive results than could be claimed by the defence of a specific position. But to go quietly over the history of the controversies, and to see how former generations in the Church dealt with kindred questions, may be the best way of finding a solution of the very serious difficulties involved in the irregular baptisms of the present day.

The history can scarcely be made attractive to those who do not feel an independent interest in the subject. It is complicated; it is dispersed over a very wide range of time and circumstances; and it requires extreme care and accuracy to estimate the precise value of the evidence. The controversy has arisen under various phases at different periods and in different places. At one time it has been a question of baptism by heretical priests, at another by lay churchmen, at another by schismatics of several kinds, at another by those who are outside the pale of the Church altogether. The testimony given with regard to one of these cases cannot be transferred indiscriminately to every other kind of irregular baptism. This has not always been sufficiently remembered, and hence has come a misapplication of evidence. In ascertaining the opinion of authorities care is needed to avoid confusing irregularity with invalidity, or mixing heresy, schism, lay churchmanship, and modern dissent all in the same category, with reference to the power of baptizing. The value of individual opinions and of the canons of local councils needs also very carefully to be weighed as an evidence of the deliberate mind of the Church. An

inquiry of this kind cannot escape many elements of tediousness.

It may as well be said at once that the survey will lead to the suggestion that baptism by an unauthorised person is not of the same unquestionable validity as that by a duly commissioned priest. In some cases the doubts are not inconsiderable. The practical conclusion as to these will be to recommend conditional baptism, as a rule, where it is practicable, in order to supply the possible or probable defects of gravely irregular administrations of the rite. This conclusion is, however, independent of the history. If any can reach a different result on a fair study of the evidence, it is open for them to do so. The Church has not yet presented any dogma on the subject to be accepted as a matter of faith.

CHAPTER II.

THE BAPTISMAL COMMISSION.

The recipients of the commission—Representative view of the ministry—Lay and clerical priesthood—Sacramental character of baptism—Exclusive terms of the commission—The parallel with teaching—Power of the keys—The plea of necessity—Its application to other sacramental ordinances—Presumption against unauthorised baptism.

THE commission to baptize was given by our Lord in the words, ‘Go ye, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’¹

The question is who were the ‘ye’ to whom He spoke this. St. Matthew says that it was when ‘the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them,’ that He bestowed the charge. One would naturally conclude that they were there alone. This is further rendered probable by the fact that the original direction to meet Him in Galilee had been given apparently only to the apostles on Maundy Thursday evening.² It was repeated after the Resurrection both by angels and by the mouth of our Blessed Lord Himself to certain

¹ Ἐδόθη μοι πάντα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς. Πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος, διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς τηρεῖν πάντα ὅσα

ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν· καὶ ἰδοὺ, ἐγὼ μεθ’ ὑμῶν εἰμι πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος.—Matt. xxviii. 18-20.

² Matt. xxvi. 32.

women, but in the form of a message to the 'disciples,' in terms which do not seem to imply that any others were called to go there.³ It was to 'the eleven' also that our Lord appeared in Jerusalem, probably after the interview in Galilee, and impressed on them the greatness of the commission, by the declaration, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.'⁴

The only difficulty about the view that the apostles were alone when the commission was given is the notice that 'some doubted.' It has been thought that this could not be the case with the apostles, and hence it has been conjectured that this was the appearance to the 'five hundred brethren,'⁵ or at least to a general body of disciples. But doubts are not at all inconsistent with what we know of the apostles immediately after the Resurrection; and it seems better to allow this than to import the presence of persons as to whom the narrative conveys no other hint.

If the apostles were alone, they clearly alone actually received the baptismal commission. Even those who think that others were there usually assume that the words were especially addressed to the apostles. This is hardly disputed.

The question then becomes one as to whether the exercise of the commission is restricted to those who first received it, and to any definite body of their successors, or whether it is open to those who have no special ministerial link with the apostles.

³ Matt. xxviii. 7, 10; Mark xvi. 7. The words, 'There shall ye see him, as he said unto you,' are clearly part of the message, and are not

addressed to the women themselves.

⁴ Mark xvi. 16.

⁵ 1 Cor. xv. 6.

Baptism might have been entrusted to them simply as representative men on behalf of the whole body of the Church. Such a representative view of the ministry is not uncommon. Canon Westcott, in speaking of the analogous power of remitting and retaining sins, says, 'The commission must be regarded properly as the commission of the Christian society, and not as that of the Christian ministry.'⁶ Bishop Moberly, in like manner, said that our Lord 'put His Church, represented in the apostles, into His own place upon the earth.' 'The gift, which is diffused in all, is concentrated in them. It is in all, because it inheres essentially in the Body of Christ, which all together are; it is in them, because they have the separate duty of ordained shepherds and overseers of the flock.' But the bishop saw that this theory must have its limitations, and that 'some' of the sayings of the great forty days were 'spoken to the apostles as governors, teachers, pastors of the Church, and belong to them and their successors in these capacities to the end of the world.' Among the sayings which were thus to be limited he included the baptismal commission.⁷ Indeed a purely representative view must break down somewhere, or the apostolic ministry becomes an institution for which there is no logical necessity at all.

There is a true sense in which the gifts to the apostles are the common heritage of the Church. Every member has a share in them in the same way that every member of the physical body has a share in the functions of the whole. Each organ has nevertheless its proper office, and it would be as reasonable to

⁶ *Speaker's Commentary* on John xx. 23.

⁷ Moberly, *Great Forty Days*, 3rd ed., pp. 96-100.

claim for every part of the human frame all the powers of the rest, as it is to claim for all Christians the ability to exercise every prerogative of the ministry. 'If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.'⁸ So in His Body, the Church, Christ has distributed His gifts in such a manner that, while all share in the one life, there are distinct functions which belong to particular channels, and cannot be transferred to the rest, or vaguely diffused through the whole.

The distinction between what can be done by any Christian, and what can be done only by an apostolic minister is not difficult to draw. Every form of priesthood is a reflection of the priesthood of Christ. As mediating between God and man, that priesthood has a double direction, one upwards from man to God, the other downwards from God to man. In the first all Christians have a share, for all are 'priests unto God,' 'to offer up spiritual sacrifices.'⁹ The office of an ordained ministry in this respect is only to act as leaders of the people. In the second all Christians have not a share. They are nowhere called priests unto men, to minister to others God's sacramental grace. This kind of priesthood is the special prerogative of the apostolic ministry, commissioned to perpetuate the ministry of Christ. These priests alone can say, 'We are ambassadors for Christ,' and can 'pray you in Christ's stead,' as 'workers together with him.'¹ Any rite which is a definite channel of grace from God to

⁸ 1 Cor. xii. 17, 18.

ii. 5, 9.

⁹ Rev. i. 6; v. 10; xx. 6; 1 Pet.

¹ 2 Cor. v. 20; vi. 1.

man must properly belong to the authorised ministerial priesthood. Thus the celebration of the holy eucharist and the giving of absolution are restricted to priests, ordination is restricted to bishops, and so also is confirmation, directly in the West and indirectly in the East. If an uncommissioned minister performs the external ceremonies attached to these sacraments, they are invalid, and have no pledge of sacramental efficacy, because they lack the power of administration.

On what grounds, it may reasonably be asked, is baptism to be put on a different footing? It is not necessary here to discuss the precise character of baptismal grace. But, if words have any meaning, such expressions as, to be ‘baptized into Christ,’ ‘to put on Christ,’ to be ‘buried with him in baptism, wherein also we are risen with him,’ to be ‘baptized for the remission of sins,’ ‘by one Spirit’ to be ‘baptized into one body’—‘the body of Christ,’ and many others of the same kind,² imply some very definite spiritual gifts, marking out baptism as a clear sacrament of the Gospel. If anyone can baptize, then baptism holds a remarkably exceptional position among the sacraments, in that it alone requires no ministerial ordination for its valid ministrations. This is not what one would naturally expect, apart from explicit revelation.

Not only, however, is there no revelation of the kind connected with the terms of the commission, but these very terms seem to imply expressly that baptism belongs to the apostolic priesthood. For our Lord says, ‘All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing

² Gal. iii. 27; Col. ii. 12; Acts ii. 38; 1 Cor. xii. 13, 27; Rom. vi. 1-11.

them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.' As God, our Lord had divine power inherent in Himself. As Man, He received authority from the Godhead. It is of this received authority that He speaks when He says that all 'power' has been given Him.³ And it is just because He has received it that He charges the apostles to go forth and baptize.⁴ For this is the authority which He transmitted to them when He said, 'As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.'⁵ They were thus constituted His representatives, in order that He might, in the persons of His ministers, exercise His delegated power to the end of the world. Unless baptism is one of the things which our Lord intended to be conferred through this special channel of ministry, it is difficult to see why the commission is brought into so immediate a connection with the ministerial authority, and most difficult to give full force to its dependence upon the power which He had received and now transmitted to His apostles.

Many have pointed out how the connection of the authority is not with the act of baptizing, but with the persons who are to baptize. Our Lord does not say

³ Matt. xxviii. 18. The word is *ἐξουσία*, from *ἐξ ἐστίν*, which implies something springing and deduced from another. The Revised Version translates it by 'authority,' to distinguish it from *δύναμις*, original, absolute power.

⁴ The *οὖν*, after *πορευθέντες*, which brings out this connection

very forcibly in the A.V., is a doubtful reading. It is found in B, D, the Vulgate, Syriac, &c., but it is wanting in *8*, A, and some other manuscripts. If it is not the true reading, the connection is clearly implied, so that it certainly gives the true sense.

⁵ John xx. 21.

merely that all nations shall be baptized, but He gives the charge of baptizing them to certain persons whom He was particularly addressing, 'Go ye, and make disciples, baptizing them.' As Laurence remarks, 'Christ does not here say, Lo, I am with baptizing, lo, I am with teaching alway, &c.; but, Go ye, baptizing, teaching, and lo, *I am with you*. The promise of His presence and concurrence is to be with *them*, not with the acts separate from them, but with *them* performing and doing those acts.' And he adds, 'If he who baptizes be not one of the *you*, an apostle or sent of Christ, in a higher or lower degree, to whom the promise was made, his act can claim no right to the promise, and therefore will be a contradiction to this sacred institution.'⁶

The strongest thing that can be urged on the other side, from the terms of the commission itself, is the parallel between baptizing and teaching: 'Go ye . . . baptizing . . . teaching.'⁷ Bellarmine, in reply to Calvin's arguments against the ministration of baptism by lay people, presses this home. He justly maintains that all persons are permitted to instruct the ignorant, and are especially bound to do so when their salvation is in danger. He instances the case of Aquila and Priscilla, expounding 'the way of God more perfectly' to Apollos,⁸ as an example in point. Therefore, he says, although the apostolic ministry is the proper channel for both baptizing and teaching, if those who

⁶ Laurence, *Lay Baptism Invalid*, 3rd ed., pp. 51, 52.

⁷ It is scarcely necessary to remark that the phrase in the A.V., 'Teach all nations,' is really 'Make

disciples of' them, and therefore has no bearing on the point in question. The parallel is in the latter part of the sentence.

⁸ Acts xviii. 26.

are not ordained may do the one in necessity, so also they may do the other.⁹

This contention must be allowed to have weight as an argument from the mere words of the commission. But in estimating its real value it must be borne in mind that there is a great distinction in the character of baptizing and of teaching. One is the conferring of a sacrament by a definite sacramental act, the other is an unsacramental process made up of many combined influences. The parallel is a verbal one in the structure of a sentence, rather than a comparison of similar operations in the sphere of spiritual things.

Moreover, it is true that, in its highest sense, the teaching of which our Lord spoke is the exclusive prerogative of the apostles. The charge is, 'Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded *you*.' Prebendary Sadler even deduces from this expression a proof that it was addressed only to the apostles. 'These words,' he remarks, 'we may say, in passing, clearly show that the commission is given to the apostles: for it is especially declared that He, through the Holy Ghost, gave commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen.'¹ If Christ instructs His Church at all, He instructs it through His apostles.'² It was the deposit of divine truth that the apostles were to teach, and this deposit rests through all time in the hands of their ministry to guard and to deliver. Others may assist, but they do not teach with primary authority. Indeed the teaching of the faith, as regards its formal enunciation, is reserved to the united voice of the

⁹ Bellarmine *De Controversiis*; *De Bapt.* vii.

² Sadler, *St. Matthew with Notes*, on xxviii. 20.

¹ Acts i. 2.

episcopate in a definite and restricted way. It would not be difficult, if the parallel is to be pressed, to make out from it a case for a very limited exercise of the baptismal authority. But the parallel is not a strict and true one, and cannot legitimately be urged, apart from the modifications required by the different character of baptizing and teaching.

It is more to the point to compare the commission with the other great charges of the apostles. ‘One thing,’ says Jeremy Taylor, ‘I offer to consideration; that since the keys of the kingdom of heaven be most notoriously and signally used in baptism, in which the kingdom of heaven, the Gospel, and all its promises, are opened to all believers, and though as certainly, yet less principally, in reconciling penitents, and admitting them to the communion of the faithful, it may be of ill consequence to let them be usurped by hands to whom they were not consigned. Certain it is, St. Peter used his keys, and opened the kingdom of heaven first, when he said,³ “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”’⁴

The office of keys is to open or close an entrance. If their gift to St. Peter involved the extraordinary personal privilege of admitting the first Jewish and the first Gentile converts into the Church of Christ,⁵ the ordinary exercise of the power of admission falls upon the ministry which he represented. ‘In St. Peter,’ says St. Ambrose, ‘all we who are priests have received the keys of the kingdom of heaven.’⁶ To baptize is to

³ Acts ii. 38.

⁵ Acts ii.; x.

⁴ Taylor, *Office Ministerial*, iv.
14, *Works*, vol. xiv. p. 451.

⁶ Ambrose, *De Sac. Dig.* i.

admit into that kingdom, and the logical consequence would seem to be that to baptize is the prerogative of the apostolic ministry.

Further, the power of the keys is closely associated with absolution, although perhaps less directly in Holy Scripture than in current theological language. The two ideas of opening and of pardoning certainly meet in baptism, which besides being a rite of admission is also a sacrament of cleansing. Therefore it has been common to see at least a secondary reference to baptism in the commission to remit and retain sins.⁷ St. Pacian, St. Ambrose, St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Chrysostom and St. Gregory the Great, among others, include baptism under the authority of the ordination formula to remit and to retain.⁸ Nor was this the opinion of the fathers alone. The apostles, says Barrow, on the Power of the Keys, 'remit sin dispensative, by consigning pardon in administration of the sacraments, especially in conferring baptism, whereby, duly administered and undertaken, all sins are washed away, and in the absolving of penitents, wherein grace is exhibited and ratified by imposition of hands.'⁹ St. Cyprian and St. Firmilian go so far as to argue for the reservation of baptism to catholic priests, on the express ground that they alone by a valid ordination have received power to remit sins.¹ Whether this be admitted or not, the analogy is very close between absolution and the cleansing aspect of baptism. Therefore one would scarcely expect,

⁷ John xx. 23.

⁸ Pacian, *Ad Symp.* Ep. i. 6; Ambrose, *De Pœn.* i. viii. 36; Cyril Alex., *In Joan.* xii.; Chrysostom, *De Sac.* iii. v. 187, vi. 196; Greg. *Mag. Mor.* xxviii. 18.

⁹ Barrow, *Power of the Keys, Works*, ed. 1859, vol. vii. p. 365.

¹ Cyprian, *Ep.* lxi. 10 [lxxv. 11]; lxxiii. [lxxii.] 7; lxxv. 17 [lxxiv. 16] &c.

prima facie, that the authority to give the first pardon in baptism should be thrown open to indiscriminate administration, if the authority to absolve from post-baptismal sin is reserved to the apostles and their successors.

Granting all this in theory, it is urged, in opposition to its rigid application, that the command to baptize is of greater obligation than the command that baptism should be given by a peculiar ministry, and that the ordinary rule must give way in cases of necessity. This is, however, to assume that the qualification of the minister affects only the regularity of baptism and not its validity. It is not safe to rely on the difficulty of executing a command, as a reason for interpreting it by a gloss of which the injunction gives no suggestion.

Nor need the denial of the validity of baptism by an unauthorised minister lead to any terrible consequences. St. Augustine took what has seemed to many a very hard line, when he insisted that every infant who dies unbaptized goes to future punishment.² Even he, at other times, admitted that this doctrine must have its modifications, and that the want 'is supplied invisibly when, not the contempt of religion, but the circumstance of necessity, has prevented the administration of baptism.'³ Necessary as baptism is, its necessity in any

² Quæcumque autem sine gratia mediatoris et sacramento ejus, in qualibet corporis ætate, de corpore exierit, et in pœnam futuram, et in ultimo judicio recepturam corpus ad pœnam. . . Quæro ubi contraxerit anima reatum quo trahitur in condemnationem, etiam infantis morte præventi, si ei per sacramentum quo etiam parvuli baptizantur,

Christi gratia non subvenerit.—Aug. *Ad Hieron.* Ep. CLXVI. ii. 5, iii. 6.

³ Invenio non tantum passionem pro nomine Christi id quod ex baptismo deerat posse supplere, sed etiam fidem conversionemque cordis, si forte ad celebrandum mysterium baptismi in angustiis temporum succurri non potest. . . . Sed tunc impletur invisibiliter, cum

individual case must be limited by the opportunity of receiving it. God prescribes rules which we are responsible for following to the utmost of our power; but justice, quite as much as mercy, requires that God Himself should supply those things which He suffers it to be impossible for men to perform. 'The law of Christ which maketh baptism necessary,' says Hooker, although not with reference to the particular point of its minister, 'must be construed and understood according to rules of natural equity. . . . And (because equity so teacheth) it is on all parts gladly confessed that there may be in divers cases life by virtue of inward baptism, even where outward is not found.'⁴ Thus, the baptisms of blood and of desire have always been reckoned by the piety of the Church as sufficient for those to whom the baptism of water has been prohibited by their circumstances.⁵ Thoughtful men have felt that the same principle would apply to the want of baptism for lack of a proper minister. 'It cannot,' says Bishop Taylor, 'but be a jealousy and a suspicion of God, a not daring to trust Him, and an unreasonable proceeding beside, that we will rather venture to dispense with divine institution than think that God will, or that we should pretend more care of children than God hath, when we will break an institution, and the rule of an ordinary ministry of God's appointing, rather than cast them upon God, as if God loved this ceremony better than He loved the child; for so it must be if the child perished for want of it.'⁶

ministerium baptismi non contemptus religionis, sed articulus necessitatis excludit.—Aug. *De Bapt.* iv. xxii. 29.

⁴ Hooker, *Ecc. Pol.* v. lx. 5.

⁵ See Bingham, *Ant.* x. ii. 20, 21.

⁶ Taylor, *Office Ministerial*, iv. 12, *Works*, vol. xiv. p. 450.

If the valid ministration of baptism is thrown open to all, it is difficult to see on what grounds of reason the valid celebration of the other great sacrament can be reserved exclusively to the priesthood. If an uncommissioned person may baptize in urgent necessity, why may not an uncommissioned person, in similar necessity, celebrate the holy eucharist, in order to communicate one who perhaps has never received the Body and Blood of Christ? No doubt appeal may be made to the modern Western custom of withholding communion from children, and of allowing some measure of lay baptism, while no part of the Church has ever permitted lay consecration of the eucharist. But at present we are only concerned with the actual terms of Christ's commission and not with later interpretations of it. Read by itself there is no apparent reason for reserving baptism to the ministry less exclusively than the celebration of the eucharist. 'The commission,' says Waterland, 'is plain and clear, and certainly leaves no more room for lay-baptism than for lay-ordination, lay-absolution, lay-consecration of the eucharist, lay-preaching and praying.'⁷ If, therefore, we take the liberty of going from the institution in one case, we may as reasonably do it in all, supposing the like necessity. And yet Scripture hath nowhere intimated that we may do it in any; but has rather taught us by some severe examples, as in the case of Saul and Uzza, that positive ministrations,

⁷ 'I mean by lay-preaching, a layman's taking upon him to preach *authoritatively* in God's name, as God's ambassador, and as sent by Him, interpreting the supposed necessity to be an extraordinary call, and to supply the want of

mission. And I mean by lay-praying, a layman's taking upon him to be a mediator and intercessor between God and His people in public prayer, or pretending to bless in God's name.' — Waterland's *Works*, vol. vi. p. 150.

confined by the institution of them to certain rules or persons, must rather be left unperformed than performed irregularly.’⁸

Indeed, the whole *logical* claim to the necessity of an ordained ministry, as a channel of sacramental grace, seems to fall to the ground if any exception is admitted. As a matter of reason, apart from permission, it is impossible to draw the line at baptism. Dr. Hook saw clearly what a dangerous gate was opened by allowing the validity of lay baptism. In an article on the subject, presumably penned by himself, in the earlier editions of his *Church Dictionary*, this is forcibly pointed out. ‘If a layman should perform the external part of ordination, confirmation, absolution, consecration of the eucharist, &c., we agree in the conclusion that this is null and void, because he has no power over the internal and spiritual part of such offices. If baptism, therefore, be anything more than an external ceremony, the same conclusion would seem to follow, for anything we can learn from Scripture to the contrary. . . . If it be granted that though laymen have no *right* to perform priestly offices, yet, if they choose, they can perform them, i.e. their usurped acts are ratified in heaven, equally with those of an empowered ministry, this is to overturn the very foundations of apostolic order, to deprive the clergy of their divine commission, or to effectually neutralise it, and finally, to reduce their office, in the judgment of the world, to the low rank of a mere literary profession or ecclesiastical employment.’⁹

⁸ Waterland's *Works*, vol. vi. Art. ‘Lay-Baptism,’ p. 432. In the 14th edition, 1887, the article has

⁹ Hook, *Church Dict.*, 10th ed., been rewritten by Lord Grimthorpe

The terms of the commission and the nature of the sacrament would be conclusive against the validity of baptism except at the hands of the apostolic ministry, if there were nothing else to go upon. Bossuet admitted this so fully that he uses it as an argument to prove the necessity of tradition. Tradition alone, he says, is the authority for extending the power of baptizing to priests, deacons, laymen and heretics, since Holy Scripture only records the delivery of the commission to the apostles themselves.¹ It is important to lay this down clearly at the outset. Tested solely by the light of the charge given by our Lord to the apostles, the presumption is distinctly against the validity of baptism by uncommissioned persons.

in a contrary sense. It was due to Dr. Hook's memory to have recorded this fact, but no indication of it is given.

¹ Bossuet, *Traité de la Com-*

munion, Œuvres, ed. 1836, t. ix. p. 160; *Défense de la Tradition sur la Communion sous une espèce*, chap. ii.; *ibid.*, pp. 189, 190.

CHAPTER III.

THE SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE.

Analogy of circumcision—Jewish baptism—Baptisms on Day of Pentecost—St. Philip's baptisms—Ananias and baptism of Saul—Baptism of Cornelius—St. Paul and baptism—Supplementary conjectures.

THE baptismal commission must first be studied in the light of other passages of Holy Scripture itself.

Some weight must be allowed to the Old Testament analogies which often throw such remarkable light upon Christian practice. Two rites here present themselves as parallels,—circumcision and Jewish baptism, and the former in particular has often been pressed into the service of defending baptism by laymen. The evidence on both lies partly outside the Bible, in the rabbinical writings; but it seems best to consider them here in connection with Holy Scripture, taking the rabbinical interpretations for what they are worth as indications of the actual usages of the original Church of the Old Covenant.

Circumcision is so far a strict parallel to holy baptism, that it stood in the same position as a rite of admission into the Church,¹ besides that it symbolically represented the effects of baptism in the removal of sin.

There is no indication in the Bible that the priests, or any particular order of persons, were the sole ad-

¹ Gen. xvii. 9-14.

ministrators of circumcision. Indeed there is one instance, at least, where it was performed by a woman, when Zipporah circumcised her own son.² Calvin, Thomas Cartwright, and other puritanic writers, maintained that in doing this she acted unlawfully.³ But this was a contention prompted by a desire to support their own views. Advocates on the other side, as Bellarmine among Romans, and Hooker and Whitgift among Anglicans, urged the instance as illustrative of the validity of baptism even by women.⁴ They of course admitted the exceptional character of the incident, and only used it in support of female baptism in cases of necessity. The circumstance is so unique in all its conditions, that perhaps controversialists have spent more labour than enough, in pressing and refuting its bearing on the subject of irregular baptism.

Not only is there an absence of any law in the Bible to make the validity of circumcision depend on the status of the administrator, but there is none in the rabbinical traditions. In later times, at any rate, circumcision was not usually performed by a priest. The ordinary operator, who was named a mohel, needed only for personal qualification that he should be a man,

² Ex. iv. 25. In 1 Macc. i. 60 we read, *Kaì τὰς γυναῖκας τὰς περιτετηκνύας τὰ τέκνα αὐτῶν ἐθανάτωσαν*,—‘they put to death the women who had circumcised their children.’ But the following verse, where it is added that they also ‘slew them that had circumcised them,’ makes it clear that the English version gives the sense correctly by translating the passage, ‘that had caused their children to be circumcised.’ Kelsall is, therefore, probably wrong in quoting it as an instance of

female administration. Waterland’s *Works*, vol. vi. p. 105.

³ Calvin, *Institutes*, iv. xv. 22. Cartwright, *Reply to Answer of Whitgift*, 1573, p. 144; *Rest of the Second Reply*, 1575, p. 124. Perkins, *Commentary on Gal.* iii. 27.

⁴ Bellarmine, *De Bapt.* vii., *Opera*, t. iii. p. 264. Hooker, *Ecc. Pol.*, v. lxii. 21. Whitgift, *Defence of the Answer*, Tract. ix., *Works*, Parker Soc. vol. ii. pp. 522, 524. Kelsall, *Waterland’s Works*, vol. vi. p. 104.

an Israelite, and should have the requisite skill.⁵ Even these conditions were perhaps not essential to the validity of the rite, for Buxtorf asserts that though a Christian, being himself uncircumcised, is not allowed by modern Jews to circumcise others, yet, if he does it, the child is considered to have been truly circumcised.⁶ Of course it must be taken into account that circumcision was an operation on the body which made it absolutely impossible to regard its irregular administration as no circumcision at all.

Besides this physical difficulty, which has no parallel in baptism, there are two crucial objections to pressing the analogy of circumcision as an evidence that an ordained ministrant is unnecessary. First, the very points which distinguish baptism from circumcision are the points that require the exercise of a mediatorial priesthood. Both are initiatory rites; but one is strictly sacramental and the other was not. Circumcision wrought no proper change of nature; it effected no incorporation into Christ; it removed no actual sin; none, at least, in the sense of baptismal regeneration. It is because baptism has this pledge of an inward grace through an outward sign that it belongs to the office of the ministry. Secondly, and no doubt for the same reason, the commission to circumcise was not given to the Jewish priests, as the commission to baptize was to the apostles. The formula in the two cases is not alike. The injunction of circumcision ran, 'Every man child among you shall be circumcised.' The injunction of baptism was, 'Go ye, baptizing.' In the first, a certain thing is commanded to be done; in the second, a certain

⁵ Lewis, *Hebrew Republic*, vol. ii. p. 451.

⁶ Buxtorf, *Synag. Jud.* iv.

order of persons is commanded to act. The difference is significant.

In the scriptural mention of Jewish baptism there is less that is analogous to that of the Christian Church than there is in the language about circumcision. Later tradition, however, supplies a great deal more analogy than lies on the surface of the Biblical references; and in the main one may suppose that this tradition probably descends from the original institution, since it harmonises well enough with what we read in the Old Testament.

The rabbis regarded baptism as essential to admission into the covenant of God. They held that the Jews had originally received it, as a nation, at Mount Sinai. Holy Scripture records the command to Moses, 'Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes.'⁷ They understood this to mean baptism, because the word 'sanctify' in the Law commonly implies the idea of purification by water, and the washing of clothes was thought to include also a washing of the person.⁸

Believing themselves to have been admitted collectively to the covenant at Sinai, the Jews did not repeat the baptism on their children, for they considered that they inherited the fruit of that first baptism, their position in the Church, by the mere fact of their Jewish parentage. But it was not so with proselytes from the Gentiles. They had no such blessed inheritance; and therefore they needed to be baptized individually as they were received. 'Israel,' says the Talmud, 'does not enter into covenant but by these three things, by circum-

⁷ Ex. xix. 10.

⁸ See Wall, *Infant Baptism*, 2nd ed., vol. i. p. 10, from Maimonides, &c.

cision, by baptism, and by sacrifice; and proselytes in like manner.’⁹ ‘Whensoever a heathen is willing to enter into the covenant, and gather himself under the wings of the majesty of God, and take upon him the yoke of the Law, he must be circumcised, and baptized, and bring a sacrifice; or, if it be a woman, be baptized, and bring a sacrifice.’¹ So essential was baptism that, when it was disputed among the rabbis whether a man was to be considered a proselyte if he had been only circumcised and not baptized, the conclusion of the wise men was that he was no proselyte until he had been baptized.² The children born of proselytes after their reception, of course, like those of Jewish parents, needed no baptism, since they then inherited the effects of baptism from their birth within the covenant.³

Thus Jewish baptism was somewhat analogous to Christian, so far as its general office of admitting into the covenant was concerned. It is, therefore, of interest to inquire who was permitted to administer it.

The direction of baptism belonged to the sanhedrim, which was partly, but not exclusively, composed of priests. The sanhedrim deputed its management to a small body, consisting of only two persons, according to the Babylonian Talmud, or three, according to that of Jerusalem and Maimonides.⁴ These had the duty of instructing adults, and of acting as a kind of sponsors for children.⁵ They were present at baptisms, but do not appear ever to have officiated themselves. Indeed, it is expressly ordered that women should, out of modesty,

⁹ *Tract. Repud.*

¹ *Tract. Issure Bia*, cap. xiii.

² *Gemara, Tit. Jevamoth*, cap. iv.

³ See Wall, *Infant Baptism*, *Introd. passim*; Lightfoot, *Horæ Heb.*

on *Matt. iii. 6*, *Works*, ed. 1684, vol. ii. p. 120.

⁴ *Tit. Jevamoth.*

⁵ *Gemara Bab., Tit. Chethuboth*, cap. i.

be actually baptized by some of their own sex, although in the presence of the wise men who stood near with averted eyes.⁶ The function of baptizing was apparently in no way restrained to a commissioned administrator.

The object of placing baptism in the hands of the sanhedrim or its consistory was not to secure its lawful administration, but to prevent the admission of unworthy proselytes. 'Proselytes,' says the Talmud, 'are dangerous to Israel, like the itch.'⁷ Baptism was irregular if it was given without the sanction of the sanhedrim, but it nevertheless held good. Sufficient evidence only was required that it had really been performed.⁸ Thus Maimonides says, 'The judges received no proselyte all the days of David and Solomon. . . . Notwithstanding there were many proselytes that in David's and Solomon's time joined themselves in the presence of private persons; and the judges of the great sanhedrim had a care of them. They drove them not away, after they were baptized, out of any place; neither took they them near to them until their after-fruits appeared.'⁹ And again, he says, in another place, that if an Israelite finds and baptizes a heathen infant, the child thereby becomes a proselyte.¹ Any Israelite, therefore, could give valid baptism, though apparently none but an Israelite.²

The question addressed to St. John the Baptist, 'Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ,

⁶ *Tit. Jevamoth*; Maimonides, *In Issure Bia*, cap. xiii.

⁷ *Tit. Jevamoth*.

⁸ Gemara Bab., *Tit. Chelhuboth*, cap. i.

⁹ Maimonides, *In Issure Bia*,

cap. xiii.

¹ Maimonides, *In Avardim*, cap. viii.

² See Wall, *Introd.*; Lightfoot, vol. ii. p. 116 *seq.*

nor Elias, neither that prophet?'³ might appear at first sight to suggest that there was some need of authority in the baptizer. But the offence of St. John's baptism was not so much that he baptized at all, although that might seem irregular, as that he baptized those who were already within the covenant. His baptism implied admission into a new covenant, and this was to be expected only from the Messiah or his forerunner. The inquiry, therefore, does not affect the testimony of the Talmud that baptism by any Israelite was sufficiently valid.

Supposing the rabbinical evidence to represent the divine command under the Law, it would have some force in reference to the question of the minister of baptism, were it not that the same fatal objections hold here as in the case of circumcision. Jewish baptism was not properly sacramental, and there was no commission with regard to it like that which was given to the apostles. The parallel breaks down exactly at the point where it is important that it should not, if the argument from one to the other is to hold good. That Jewish baptism should not require an ordained ministrant, and that Christian baptism should, is precisely in accordance with what we know of the different character of the two rites. Thus the Old Testament analogy is no help towards interpreting the New Testament commission.

Coming down to the history of the early Christian Church in the New Testament, we find certain records of actual baptisms: but they are not numerous, and are inconclusive as to the persons of the administrators.

³ John i. 25.

The first occasion when Christian baptism was given was, of course, on the day of Pentecost. Then, we are told, ‘about three thousand’ were baptized.⁴ At the Hampton Court Conference, Bishop Bancroft urged that it would have been impossible for twelve men to have baptized so many in one day, and that therefore some who were not apostles must have assisted.⁵ This argument has been repeated over and over again. Jeremy Taylor doubted whether there was any need to suppose that all the baptisms took place on that one day.⁶ It is, however, most natural to suppose that they did. And there is no real impossibility in each apostle having baptized two hundred and fifty persons in the course of a day. Laurence aptly remarks that one bishop can confirm above five hundred persons, with a longer form of words, in less than three or four hours, and two clergymen can administer to above five hundred communicants, also with a longer form, in two or three hours.⁷ Moreover, if reports are true, the thing has been done more than once. St. Francis Xavier is said to have stated that he had baptized 10,000 Indians with his own hand in one month, which would give an average of more than 300 a day; and even greater numbers have sometimes been attributed to him.⁸ In Kent, on Christmas Day, 597, Augustine and his companions, who can scarcely have exceeded at most a party of fifty clerics, are related to have baptized as many as 10,000 people.⁹

⁴ Acts ii. 41.

⁵ Cardwell, *Conferences*, p. 175.

⁶ Taylor, *Office Ministerial*, iv. 11, *Works*, vol. xiv. p. 449.

⁷ Laurence, *Dissenters' Baptism null and void*, ed. 1713, p.30.

⁸ Butler, *Lives of the Saints*, 1866, vol. xii. p. 30; Forbes, *Instructions Historico-Theologicæ*, x. xiii. 13.

⁹ Perry, *History of the English Church*, vol. i. p. 24.

The number of baptisms, then, is no proof that others besides the apostles ministered on the occasion. If they did, they were not altogether uncommissioned. As has often been pointed out, the 'seventy,' and perhaps others of that first company, were not properly laymen. Or if this is not to be taken into account, it remains that at any rate the baptisms must have been conferred by the special sanction and authority of the apostles, so that there would be no parallel between this case and that of baptism by persons who can claim no episcopal authority whatsoever.

The next baptisms mentioned are those by St. Philip the Deacon.¹ St. Hilary explains the seeming irregularity of his baptism of the Ethiopian, by saying that the eunuch's impatient desire led him to demand from a deacon what properly belonged to the office of the apostles.² Not only, however, did St. Philip baptize the eunuch, under exceptional circumstances of urgency, but also, apparently without any such immediate necessity, those 'men and women' in Samaria who believed his preaching. The so-called Apostolical Constitutions, after laying down in the name of the apostles that deacons may not baptize, explain the case of St. Philip by saying that he was appointed to the office of baptizing by a direct call from Christ, the great High Priest.³ The Constitutions are not, however, to be trusted as genuine transcripts of the veritable decrees of apostles; and, in the absence of any record of such a call in the Book of the Acts, it may be doubted whether

Acts viii. 12, 38.

² Sacramentum ipsum baptismi adeo impatientis desiderii cupiditate præveniens: ut a diacono ministerium apostolici officii, salutis suæ

cupidus, exigeret.—Hilary, *Comm. in Ps. lxxvii.* 13.

³ *Const. Apost.* viii. 46. See *post*, chap. iv.

this explanation is true. Maskell seems rather to be right when he says that the sacred history relates his baptizing as though 'he was but exercising an usual and lawful office of his ministry. . . . We are told, as it were as a matter of course, that "he baptized."' ⁴

It may, no doubt, be surmised that the different orders of the ministry were not at first fixed in their later and definite forms. The original deacons may, therefore, not have exactly corresponded to the deacons of subsequent days. But the habitual ministry of baptism by St. Philip at any rate shows that the apostles did not keep it exclusively in their own hands.

The Apostolical Constitutions in the same passage explain the right whereby Ananias baptized St. Paul,⁵ by a similar call from our Blessed Lord. There may be more probability here than in the case of St. Philip. But there seems nothing unreasonable in the conjecture that Ananias may already have been ordained by the apostles. 'I can hardly think,' says Dr. Burton, with reference to this very incident, 'that at this time any persons administered baptism except those who had received their own commission from the apostles.'⁶ We know, however, too little about the position of Ananias to argue anything certain from the circumstance in either direction.

More to the point is the baptism of Cornelius and his family. St. Peter 'commanded them to be baptized,' apparently by the 'brethren from Joppa' who had accompanied him to Cæsarea.⁷ Some have considered that the command of St. Peter was really that water

⁴ Maskell, *Holy Baptism*, p. 177. *siastical History*, 1833, vol. i. p. 88.

⁵ Acts ix. 17, 18.

⁷ Acts x. 23, 48.

⁶ Burton, *Lectures upon Eccle-*

should be brought to him whereby the means for the baptism would be provided. This is, however, a strained explanation of the words, and it must be admitted that the more natural meaning is that others performed the ceremony. Hilary the Deacon, or whoever the writer was who generally is known as the Pseudo-Ambrose, took the instance as a clear one of lay baptism.⁸ His date is too late to give any value to his testimony beyond that of his own conjecture. It is at least equally reasonable to suppose that some of the brethren from Joppa had been ordained.⁹ The organisation of the Church had by this time passed out of quite its elementary stage.¹ At any rate the men were authorised by St. Peter, and therefore acted with some kind of episcopal authority.

St. Paul, or St. Silas, baptized Lydia and her household at Philippi, and also the gaoler and his family.² At Corinth St. Paul baptized Crispus and Gaius and the household of Stephanas.³ Since he did not remember baptizing any others there, the 'many' who were baptized at the same time⁴ must have received their baptism from someone else, probably from St. Silas, who was evidently ordained. St. Paul's assertion that he had been sent 'not to baptize, but to preach the gospel,'⁵ cannot be understood to imply that to baptize was not part of his apostolic office. It was only for special reasons that he generally forbore to administer the sacrament himself.

⁸ Pseud. Amb., *Comm. in 1 Cor.* i. 17.

⁹ Taylor, *Office Ministerial*, iv. 9, *Works*, vol. xiv. p. 449; Waterland, *Works*, vol. vi. p. 182; and others.

¹ Acts ix. 31. 'The churches

were edified'—*οἰκοδομοῦμεναι*—i.e. organised.

² Acts xvi. 15, 33.

³ 1 Cor. i. 14, 16.

⁴ Acts xviii. 8.

⁵ 1 Cor. i. 17.

This is all the evidence that can be gathered from the Church history of the New Testament itself. It leaves the question pretty much where it would be if these notices did not occur. In no instance is it quite clear that baptism was given by an unordained person, while in every instance it is clear that whoever administered it did so under direct authority of some kind or other. The most that can be said is that no special emphasis is laid on the exclusive power of the apostolic ministry to exercise the baptismal commission.

Even conjecture has done very little to supply the want of information in the Bible. The Pseudo-Ambrose asserted that at first, in order to meet the needs of the Church, all were allowed to baptize, but as soon as the organisation was complete and clergy were appointed to various places, this general licence was withdrawn, and baptism was strictly reserved to the clergy, apparently including deacons.⁶ This was perhaps only his own private theory, for there is nothing to support it.

Less probable still is an ingenious idea, propounded by one of the leading nonjurors. 'In the early ages of Christianity,' he says, 'while the charismata were frequent in the Church, such laymen as were anointed by the Holy Ghost did (I question not)

⁶ Primum enim omnes docebant, et omnes baptizabant. . . . Ut ergo cresceret plebs et multiplicaretur, omnibus inter initia concessum est evangelizare, et baptizare, et scripturas in ecclesia explanare: at ubi omnia loca circumplexa est ecclesia, conventicula constituta sunt, et rectores, et cetera officia in ecclesiis sunt ordinata; ut nullus de clericis auderet qui ordinatus non esset, presumere officium, quod sciret non

sibi creditum vel concessum. . . . Hinc ergo est, unde nunc neque diaconi in populo predicant, neque clerici vel laici baptizant.—Pseud. Amb. *Comm. in Ephes.* iv. 11, 12. Hoady fell back on the same explanation when he was defending episcopal ordination against the arguments deduced from the supposed instances of lay baptism in Holy Scripture.—*Defence of Episcopal Ordination*, 1712, pp. 462-6.

frequently administer baptism (particularly prophets, who notwithstanding had no imposition of hands, nor no outward commission given them), especially in the absence of bishops and presbyters: and no doubt of it this they did as they were thereunto prompted or moved by the Holy Ghost from within them: but yet even these illuminated laymen or prophets (I presume, and I think reasonably) did not attempt to administer baptism unless they were such as were well known to be thus illuminated. . . . Then, upon the general failure of the charismata, the unilluminated, Christians by profession, observed and took notice that several laymen in preceding times had baptized, and not considering and distinguishing aright how such were qualified by the unction of the Holy Ghost for such administrations, they imagined that mere laymen, as such, and without the heavenly unction, had a right to baptize, at least in what seemed to them, and was called by them, cases of necessity. . . . This seems to me to be the original of lay baptism.⁷ All this would be plausible enough in itself; but, if it were true, it is incredible that there should be no trace whatever of it in any writing of the early fathers of the Church, where they discuss the baptismal controversies of their days. The real position of the question must be sought on some surer grounds than those of clever conjecture. In other words, it must be unravelled out of the complicated pages of the history of the Church.

⁷ An anonymous letter among the nonjuring correspondence preserved at Trinity College, Glenalmond, printed in Rev. G. Williams' *Orthodox Church of the East*, 1868, p. 174. Williams surmises that it is by Dr. Brett. (p. lxxviii.) But the same opinion is

put forth in a printed *Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury*, 1738, by 'Philaletus,' in terms so similar that it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the author of both was the same. 'Philaletus' certainly was not Dr. Brett.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EARLY CHURCH.—CENT. II, III.

St. Ignatius—Reservation of baptism to bishops—Tertullian on lay baptism; on female baptism; on heretical baptism—The Apostolical Canons on heretical baptism—The Apostolical Constitutions: on heretical baptism; on lay baptism.

THE first sub-apostolic writer who speaks of the minister of baptism is St. Ignatius in the very early years of the second century. In a well-known chapter of the Epistle to the Smyrnæans he lays down that no man is to perform any ecclesiastical rite without the authority and commission of the bishop. ‘It is not lawful,’ he says particularly, ‘without the bishop, to baptize.’¹ This is a distinct requirement of episcopal permission, and apparently of ordination. Even, therefore, if a certain amount of liberty had been allowed at first, it had soon been repressed. It is more reasonable to suppose that it had never existed, and that St. Ignatius simply repeats the apostolic tradition. Into the question of the effect of baptism administered by one who had no commission from a bishop he naturally does not enter. It was too soon, probably, for any disputes to have arisen on such a point of discipline.

In practice, the tendency of the early Church seems

¹ Οὐκ ἐξόν ἐστιν χωρὶς τοῦ τοῦτο καὶ τῷ Θεῷ εὐάρεστον, ἵν’ ἐπισκόπου οὔτε βαπτίζῃ οὔτε ἀγάπην ἀσφαλὲς ἢ καὶ βέβαιον πᾶν ὁ πράσσειν· ἀλλ’ ὁ ἂν ἐκεῖνος δοκιμάσῃ, σεται.—Ign. *Ad Smyrnæos*, viii.

to have been to keep the administration of baptism as much as possible in the hands of the bishops themselves. This is shown, among other things, by the custom, already established in Tertullian's day, the end of the second century, of restricting the times for baptism to Easter and Pentecost, except under sudden emergency or special circumstances.² This not only gave solemnity to the rite, but enabled the bishop to act as the principal agent. If inferior ministers baptized, it was chiefly in the capacity of his delegates and assistants.

Tertullian, about the year 200, makes a detailed statement as to the minister of baptism, which opens out a wider range of permission. He is at one with Ignatius upon the proper prerogative of bishops. 'The right of giving it indeed,' he says, speaking of baptism, 'hath the chief priest, who is the bishop; then the presbyters and deacons, yet not without the authority of the bishops, for the honour of the Church, which being preserved, peace is preserved.' If he had ended here, one would gather that, in his estimation, priests, and deacons too, had the inherent power to baptize, but needed the licence of a bishop in order to the regular exercise of their ministry. But he proceeds to enlarge the limits further even than to deacons, saying that 'laymen have also the right, for that which is equally received may equally be given, unless the name "disciples" denote at once bishops or priests or deacons.' This last clause, if it is a correct translation of the obscure original, seems to be a somewhat irrelevant reference to the text which says 'Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.'³ Tertullian apparently would

² Tert. *De Bapt.* xix.

³ John iv. 2. The above transla-

tion is from the Library of the Fathers. In the Ante-Nicene

put the ministry of baptism exactly on a level with the ministry of teaching, doubtless referring to the parallel in the original commission, for he continues, ‘The word of God ought not to be hidden from any; wherefore also baptism, which is equally derived from God, may be administered by all.’ This was only, however, to be done in circumstances of necessity. ‘But how much more incumbent on laymen,’ he proceeds, ‘is the duty of reverence and modesty. Seeing that these things belong to those of higher estate, let them not take upon themselves the office of the bishopric set apart for the bishops. Emulation is the mother of divisions. A most holy apostle hath said that “all things are lawful, but all things are not expedient.” Let it in truth suffice thee to use such things in thy necessities, whensoever the circumstances of place, or time, or person compel thee. For then is a boldness in him that aideth admissible, when the case of him that is in danger is urgent. For he will be guilty of destroying a man, if he shall forbear to do that for him which he had free power to do.’⁴

Library, it is translated, ‘unless bishops or priests or deacons be on the spot, [ordinary] disciples are called [to the work].’

⁴ Dandi quidem habet jus summus sacerdos, qui est episcopus. Dehinc presbyteri et diaconi, non tamen sine episcopi auctoritate, propter ecclesiæ honorem. Quo salvo, salva pax est. Alioquin etiam laicis jus est. Quod enim ex æquo accipitur, ex æquo dari potest, nisi episcopi jam, aut presbyteri, aut diaconi vocantur discentes. [or vocantur, dicentes,] Domini sermo non debet abscondi ab ullo. Proinde

et baptismus, æque Dei census, ab omnibus exerceri potest: sed quanto magis laicis disciplina verecundiæ et modestiæ incumbit cum ea majoribus competat, ne sibi adsumant dicatum episcopis officium episcopatus. Æmulatio schismatum mater est. ‘Omnia licere,’ dixit sanctissimus apostolus, ‘sed non omnia expedire.’ Sufficiat scilicet in necessitatibus ut utaris; sicubi, aut loci, aut temporis, aut personæ conditio compellit. Tunc enim constantia succurrentis excipitur, cum urget circumstantia periclitantis. Quoniam reus erit perdit

This is a most emphatic declaration of the validity of lay baptism. Restricted as it is by his language to cases of necessity, there is no hint that this restriction refers to anything more than order. The expression that the layman has 'free power' to baptize at all is a complete acknowledgment of the principle of lay baptism. It is, however, to be remembered that the whole tone of Tertullian's words, especially when taken in connection with his judgment on heretical baptism, presently to be considered, shows that he was not contemplating any other case than that of a lay churchman.

How far Tertullian was expressing the current opinion of the Church, and how far his own private opinion, may of course be open to question. He combined so much originality and eccentricity of thought with catholic truth, that he is rarely a simple exponent of Church teaching. It certainly somewhat detracts from the value of his testimony, as an evidence of common practice, that he elsewhere extends the permission of lay ministrations to the celebration of the eucharist, where there are no clergy set apart to officiate.⁵ Here, plainly, he was not expressing the orthodox view. But this last was in his Montanist days, and may have been only a peculiarity of his later mind.

Tertullian's reasoning is faulty. When he defends lay baptism on the ground that what 'is equally re-

hominis, si supersederit præstare quod libere potuit.—Tert. *De Bapt.* xvii.

⁵ Nonne et laici sacerdotes sumus? Scriptum est, Regnum quoque nos et sacerdotes Deo et Patri suo fecit. Differentiam inter ordinem et plebem constituit ecclesie auctoritas, et honor per ordinis

concessum sanctificatus. Adeo ubi ecclesiastici ordinis non est concessus, et offers, et tinguis, et sacerdos es tibi solus. . . . Igitur si habes jus sacerdotis in temetipso, ubi necesse est, habere oportet etiam disciplinam sacerdotis, ubi necesse sit habere jus sacerdotis.—Tert. *Exhort. ad Castit.* vii.

ceived may equally be given,' he propounds a principle which cannot be sustained. His logic is not more satisfactory when he argues in the Exhortation on Chastity that, because laics are in some sense priests, therefore in necessity they can perform all priestly acts. He seems to confuse the priesthood of the clergy and laity together, and to regard the restraint upon lay ministrations merely as a regulation of ecclesiastical discipline. Certainly Tertullian cannot have borrowed his reasons from catholic teaching, whatever be the case as to his facts.

After all allowance has been made for Tertullian's idiosyncrasies, his statement remains an undoubted piece of historical evidence for lay baptism. It is incredible that he should have propounded the matter so explicitly if it was wholly a whim of his own. We may, therefore, conclude that baptism by lay churchmen, in necessity, was recognised by some persons at the end of the second century, in his locality, if nowhere else. This may have been either at Carthage or at Rome. It is usually thought that probability is in favour of the former, but there is no trace of such teaching at Carthage fifty years later when Cyprian was bishop.⁶

Tertullian did not extend the permission of lay baptism to women. He continues the passage already quoted from the treatise on baptism, by a denunciation of the wantonness of a woman who would venture to baptize, as, he said, did 'that most monstrous woman Quintilla.'⁷ Even if the writer of the Acts of Paul and Thecla had not admitted that they were a forgery, it would be incredible, he says, that the power claimed there for Thecla to teach and baptize with St. Paul's

⁶ See *post*, chap. v.

⁷ Tert. *De Bapt.* i, xvii.

authority could be genuine, since St. Paul forbade a woman to teach.⁸ In another treatise he mentions it as a mark of certain heretical women, perhaps referring to the Marcionites, that they dared ‘perchance even to baptize.’⁹ And in a still later essay, written after his lapse, he says, ‘A woman is not permitted to baptize . . . nor dare she claim any single man’s, much less any priestly, office.’¹ Primarily these protests would no doubt apply to officiating in public, as the priestesses of some of the heretical sects did; but the whole tenor of the passages seems to exclude women from the right which he had claimed for Church laymen in necessity.

On one other point, which was soon to cause violent controversy, Tertullian expresses an unqualified opinion. This was the question of baptism by heretics. He unhesitatingly rejects its validity. ‘To us, in any case,’ he says, ‘there is one baptism, as well according to the gospel of the Lord, as the letters of the apostle: seeing that there is one God and one baptism, one Church in the heavens. But certainly one may well inquire what ought to be maintained about heretics; for this saying was directed to ourselves. Now heretics have no fellowship in our discipline, of whom indeed the very privation of communion testifieth that they are aliens. I am not bound to admit in their case that which hath

⁸ 1 Cor. xiv. 35; 1 Tim. ii. 12. In the extant version of the Acts of Paul and Thecla, there is no clear reference to her baptizing. Paul’s charge to her is only, ‘Go, and teach the word of God.’ It is said that ‘she enlightened many by the word of God,’ which has been understood, perhaps improbably, to mean that she baptized them.

⁹ *Ipsæ mulieres hæreticæ quam procaces! quæ audeant docere, contendere, exorcismos agere, curationes repromittere, fortassean et tinguere.*—*De Præscrip. Hær.* xli.

¹ *Non permittitur mulieri in ecclesia loqui, sed nec docere, nec tinguere, nec offerre, nec ullius virilis muneris, nedum sacerdotalis officii sortem sibi vindicare.*—*Tert. De Virg. Vel.* ix.

been taught to me, because we and they have not the same God, nor one, that is, the same Christ. And therefore neither have we one, because not the same baptism with them, which, since they have it not rightly, without doubt they have not at all, nor can that be counted which is not there: and so also they cannot receive it, since they have it not.' He goes on to say that he had written a treatise in Greek on this subject at greater length, but the book is lost.² Other passages in his works seem to indicate that he retained the same opinion in his later years.³

That the general mind of the Church was then against accepting the baptism of heretics is further supported by Tertullian's contemporary, St. Clement of Alexandria, who speaks of heretical baptism as 'not proper and true water.'⁴

The date of the Apostolical Canons is one of the vexed questions of early Christian literature. This is not the place to enter upon it. It is enough to say that they cannot be taken literally as decrees passed by the first apostles; that they certainly are older than

² Unus omnino baptismus est nobis, tam ex Domini evangelio, quam ex apostoli litteris; quoniam unus Deus, et unum baptisma, et una ecclesia in cœlis. Sed circa hæreticos sane quid custodiendum sit, digne quis retractet; ad nos enim editum est. Hæretici autem nullum habent consortium nostræ disciplinæ, quos extraneos utique testatur ipsa ademptio communicationis. Non debeo in illis agnoscere quod mihi est præceptum, quia non idem Deus est nobis et illis, nec

unus Christus, id est, idem. Ideoque nec baptismus unus, quia non idem. Quem cum rite non habeant, sine dubio non habent; nec capit numerari, quod non habetur. Ita nec possunt accipere, quia non habent. Sed de isto plenius jam nobis in Græco digestum est.—*De Bapt.* xv.

³ Nemo ab eo illuminatur, a quo contenebratur.—*De Præscrip. Hæres.* xii. *Comp. De Pud.* xix.

⁴ τὸ βάπτισμα τὸ αἱρετικὸν οὐκ οἰκείον ὕδωρ λογιζόμενον. — *Clem. Alex. Stromata*, I. xix. ad fin.

the doubtful time at which they were gathered into a collected group; and that they are of Eastern origin. Within these vague limits critics differ widely as to the exact time, place, and authority of the enactments. If they are included here under the general heading of the evidence of the second century, it is because there is no later period to which their testimony on baptism can so well be attributed. It has been thought that, if they had been in existence in the third century, they would certainly have been explicitly quoted by St. Cyprian and St. Firmilian, who were engaged in controversies upon the very point concerning which the Apostolical Canons would have supported their contentions. That they do not quote them by name may be conclusive against their claim to be really apostolic; but that they refer to traditions corresponding to the baptismal decrees of the Canons is in favour of their earlier date. It is, at any rate, much easier to explain the lack of verbatim quotation from them in the third century writings, than it would be to account for the absence of any record of the council which passed them, if it was held after the subject matter of heretical baptism had come into hot controversy.

Whatever the truth be as to the date of these Canons, their effect upon the Eastern Church has been that of the primary authority indicated by the title 'apostolical.' They were finally accepted into the code of the Church by the quinisext council in Trullo, held by the East to be general;⁵ and are, therefore, to this day quoted by Eastern Christendom, not only as evidence of early opinion, but as of œcumenical force

⁵ Ἄλλὰ μὴν καὶ παραδοθέντας ἡμῖν ὀνόματι τῶν ἀγίων καὶ ἐνδόξων Ἀποστόλων πέντε Κανόνων.—Conc. Trull. Can. 2.

in ruling the matters upon which they touch. They are therefore of extreme importance as having guided the whole of the discipline of the East upon the unorthodox ministration of baptism.

These Canons utterly and emphatically repudiate heretical baptism. The 46th runs: ‘A bishop or priest who has received the baptism or sacrifice of heretics, we command to be deposed, for what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?’⁶ The 47th: ‘A bishop or priest, if he baptizes anew one who has the true baptism, or if he does not baptize one who has been defiled by the ungodly, let him be deposed, as mocking the cross and the death of the Lord, and not distinguishing priests from false priests.’ A third canon, the 68th, incidentally notes that one who has been baptized by heretics cannot be reckoned among ‘the faithful.’ How absolute was the rejection of such baptism is shown by the fact that a neglect to give catholic baptism to one polluted by its heretical imitation is held to be as great an offence as the iteration of a true baptism.

Two other canons are of moment, as throwing light on the later judgments of the Eastern Church in deciding the heretical character of certain kinds of baptism. One of these, the 49th, orders a priest to be deposed who does not baptize in the triple Name; and the other, the 50th, if he does not perform the three immersions. This latter, as will be seen hereafter, has played a particular part in guiding the action of Easterns in so often counting the baptisms of Western Christendom as the invalid baptism of heretics.⁷

⁶ 2 Cor. vi. 15.

⁷ Ἐπίσκοπον, ἢ πρεσβύτερον, αἵρε-

τικῶν δεξαμένους βάπτισμα, ἢ θυσίαν, καθαιρεῖσθαι προστάσσομεν, τίς γὰρ

One or two points are to be noticed in these canons, besides the special one of heretical baptism towards which they are directed. Throughout, bishops and priests are spoken of together as ministers of baptism, without distinction. This is probably a mark of the very early date of the canons. They seem to belong to a period before the restrictions of the ministration had begun, for they can hardly be placed so late as the time when these restrictions had again been relaxed. They therefore appear to indicate the discipline of an age distinctly anterior to Tertullian's time. If so, it is of importance to observe that neither deacons nor laymen are mentioned at all as ministers of baptism. It is impossible to speak with certainty, but it is surely not an unreasonable surmise from these ancient canons, that bishops and priests of the catholic communion

συμφώνησις Χριστῷ πρὸς βελίαν: ἡ τις μερὶς πιστῷ μετὰ ἀπίστου;—Can. 46.

Ἐπίσκοπος, ἢ πρεσβύτερος, τὸν κατὰ ἀλήθειαν ἔχοντα βάπτισμα, ἐὰν ἄνωθεν βαπτίση, ἢ τὸν μεμολυσμένον παρὰ τῶν ἀσεβῶν ἐὰν μὴ βαπτίση, καθαιρείσθω, ὡς γελῶν τὸν σταυρὸν, καὶ τὸν τοῦ Κυρίου θάνατον, καὶ μὴ διακρίνων ἱερέας ψευδοῖερέων.—Can. 47.

Εἴ τις ἐπίσκοπος, ἢ πρεσβύτερος, κατὰ τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου διάταξιν μὴ βαπτίση εἰς Πατέρα, καὶ Υἱὸν, καὶ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα, ἀλλ' εἰς τρεῖς ἀνάρχους, ἢ εἰς τρεῖς υἱοὺς, ἢ εἰς τρεῖς παρακλήτους, καθαιρείσθω.—Can. 49.

Εἴ τις ἐπίσκοπος, ἢ πρεσβύτερος, μὴ τρία βαπτίσματα μιᾶς μυσίσεως ἐπιτελέσῃ, ἀλλὰ ἓν βάπτισμα, τὸ εἰς τὸν θάνατον τοῦ Κυρίου διδόμενον, καθαιρείσθω. Οὐ γὰρ εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος,

εἰς τὸν θάνατόν μου βαπτίσατε, ἀλλὰ πορευθέντες μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Πατρὸς, καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος.—Can. 50.

Εἴ τις ἐπίσκοπος, ἢ πρεσβύτερος, ἢ διάκονος, δευτέραν χειροτονίαν δέξεται παρὰ τινος, καθαιρείσθω καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ ὁ χειροτονήσας, εἰ μὴ γε ἄρα συσταίῃ, ὅτι παρὰ αἰρετικῶν ἔχει τὴν χειροτονίαν. Τοὺς γὰρ παρὰ τῶν τοιούτων βαπτισθέντας ἢ χειροτονηθέντας, οὔτε πιστοὺς οὔτε κληρικοὺς εἶναι δυνατόν.—Can. 68.

See Πηδάλιον, a collection of Greek canons, with some learned modern scholia and notes. There are editions 1800, 1841, and 1864. It appears to be the most authoritative work of the kind now quoted by theologians of the orthodox Church of the East.

were alone acknowledged as the legitimate ministers of baptism in the century that succeeded the death of the first apostles.

It is natural to connect the Apostolical Constitutions with the Canons, although they are a very different work of very inferior importance. The Canons are almost certainly genuine, while the Constitutions contain distinct elements of forgery. As they stand now they are written in the first person, in the name of individual apostles, or of the whole body collectively. This is a false colouring intended to invest the production with an authority that does not belong to it. What other liberties the compiler may have taken it is impossible to say, although the unskilful way in which manifest interpolations are brought in is some help in judging what is original and what is not. A great deal is probably ancient, incorporated bodily in large pieces with trifling adaptations. But the contents belong to different dates, and there is no means of apportioning them with even approximate accuracy. The book as it now stands belongs perhaps to the fourth or fifth century, possibly later, and the two last books are thought not to be of the same date as the rest. The documents on which it is based are probably, however, mainly if not entirely ante-Nicene. They are chiefly Eastern, and may roughly be guessed to indicate the practice of some parts of the second and third centuries. The quini-sexth council rejected them on account of the spurious interpolations.⁸ They are, therefore, not of authority, but only of illustrative historical interest.

⁸ Conc. Trull. can. 2.

Upon heretical baptism their testimony exactly agrees with that of the Canons. ‘Be ye contented with one baptism alone, that which is into the death of the Lord; not that which is conferred by wicked heretics, but that which is conferred by unblamable priests, “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;” and let not that which comes from the ungodly be received by you. . . . Those that receive polluted baptism from the ungodly will become partners in their opinions. For they are not priests. For God says to them: “Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me.”⁹ Nor, indeed, are those that are baptized by them initiated, but are polluted, not receiving the remission of sins, but the bond of impiety.’¹

The Constitutions being no doubt later than the Canons, they deal with some points untouched by the latter. Thus, as the following extracts will show, they explicitly forbid any to baptize except the bishops and priests whom the Canons only tacitly assume to be the persons who will exercise the ministry.

‘As to women’s baptizing, we let you know that there is no small peril to those that undertake it. Therefore we do not advise you to it; for it is dangerous, or, rather, wicked and impious. . . . If in the foregoing Constitutions we have not permitted them to teach, how will anyone allow them, contrary to nature, to perform the office of a priest? For this is one of the ignorant practices of Gentile atheism, to ordain women priests to the female deities, not one of the constitutions of Christ. For if baptism were to be administered by

⁹ Hos. iv. 6.

¹ *Const. Apost.* vi. xv.

women, certainly our Lord would have been baptized by His own mother, and not by St. John; or when He sent us to baptize, He would have sent along with us women also for this purpose. But now He has nowhere, either by constitution or by writing, delivered to us any such thing; as knowing the order of nature, and the decency of the action; as being the creator of nature, and the legislator of the constitution.'

'Neither do we permit the laity to perform any of the offices belonging to the priesthood; as, for instance, . . . baptism. . . . For such sacred offices are conferred by the laying on of the hands of the bishop. But a person to whom such an office is not committed, but he seizes upon it for himself, he shall undergo the punishment of Uzziah.'

'Nay, further, we do not permit to other clerics to baptize; as, for instance, neither to readers, nor singers, nor door-keepers, nor sub-deacons, but to the bishops and priests alone, the deacons ministering to them therein. And those who venture upon it shall undergo the punishment of the companions of Corah.'

'The priest alone is to teach, to offer, to baptize, to bless the people; the deacon is to minister to the bishop and to priests, that is, to do the office of a deacon (*διακονεῖν*), and not to meddle with other things.'²

A later book of the Constitutions repeats these injunctions as regards baptizing by a deacon. 'A deacon does not bless . . . does not baptize, does not offer. . . . A deaconess does not bless, does not perform anything belonging to the office of priests or deacons, but only is to keep the doors, and to minister to the priests in the baptizing of women, for the sake of decency.' And

² *Const. Apost.* III., ix., x., xi., xx.

again: 'It is not lawful for a deacon to offer, or baptize or to give the blessing. . . . If some do blame Philip our deacon, and Ananias our faithful brother, that the one did baptize the eunuch, and the other me Paul, these men do not understand what we say. For we have affirmed only that no one seizes the priestly dignity to himself, but either receives it from God, as Melchizedek and Job did, or from the high priest, as Aaron from Moses. Wherefore Philip and Ananias did not appoint themselves, but were commissioned by Christ, the High Priest of that God to whom no being is to be compared.'³

The hand of the manipulator of the original is perhaps to be detected more than once in these passages. The homiletic tone, with its Biblical references, is probably entirely his own; and the mention of the lower orders of the ministry must be an interpolation to adapt the injunctions to the elaborate ecclesiastical organisation of his own day. But there is no reason to doubt the substantial accuracy with which he represents the decrees upon which he based his work. The complete prohibition to deacons to baptize suggests an early date for them. We may be almost sure that they were very old canons adapted, rather than falsified, to make them bear on the questions of a later century.

The East, then, had apparently no trace as yet of that partial allowance of lay baptism which is found in the writings of Tertullian, while East and West alike entirely repudiated baptism by heretics.

³ *Const. Apost.* VIII. xxviii., xlvi.

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRST CONTROVERSY.—CENT. III.

Eastern Councils on heretical baptism—The dispute between Pope Stephen and the Eastern and African bishops—Letters and Councils of St. Cyprian—Subsequent relations of Rome with Africa—Summary of the Eastern and African arguments—Bearing on schismatical and lay baptism—The Roman view—Estimate of the controversy.

THE third century is memorable in the history of discussions about the minister of baptism, for it was the period of the most considerable controversy that has arisen on the subject. The dispute was entirely confined to the question of the validity of baptism administered by heretics.

In about the year 231, a council of Phrygian, Galatian, Cilician, and other neighbouring bishops, was held at Iconium, to resolve some doubts that had been raised as to Montanist baptism. Firmilian, Bishop of Cæsarea, was one of the prelates who attended the synod, and he gives an account of it in a letter written some years after to St. Cyprian. The sense of the council was that heretics cannot baptize, because they have separated themselves from the Church of God, where all grace and power resides, and where alone there is in the priesthood the ability to minister sacramental grace. Therefore, even if the baptizer had once been a bishop in the catholic Church, the baptisms conferred by him after he seceded from its communion, *ipso facto*, were

void.¹ In giving this decision, Firmilian says they were only reaffirming ‘that which was delivered by Christ and by His apostles. Nor,’ he says, ‘do we remember that this ever had a beginning among us, since it has ever been observed here, that we know of none but the one Church of God, and account holy baptism to be of none but the holy Church.’²

St. Dionysius of Alexandria mentions also a council at Synnada, in Phrygia, some time in the first half of the century, as having passed a decree similar to that of Iconium; and he, too, bears testimony to the antiquity of the custom of baptizing converts from heresy.³

In Africa the rule had not been so uniformly strict. There it had been common, at least in more recent times, to receive heretics into communion without a second, catholic baptism. This was the difference between Africa and the East. The custom of the latter, Firmilian said, had been ‘the custom of truth,’ and that of the former, ‘the custom of error.’⁴

It was at a council at Carthage, under Agrippinus, which some place in about the year 215, and others,

¹ Sed et ceteri quique hæretici, si se ab ecclesia Dei sciderint, nihil habere potestatis aut gratiæ possunt; quando omnis potestas et gratia in ecclesia constituta sit, ubi præsentem majores natu, qui et baptizandi et manum imponendi et ordinandi possident potestatem. Hæretico enim sicut ordinare non licet, nec manum imponere; ita nec baptizare, nec quicquam sancte nec spiritualiter gerere, quando alienus sit a spirituali et deifica sanctitate.—Firm. apud Cyp. *Ep.* lxxv. [lxxiv.] 7. Nos etiam

illos quos hi qui prius in ecclesia catholica episcopi fuerant, et postmodum sibi potestatem clericæ ordinationis assumptas baptizaverant, pro non baptizatis habendos judicavimus.—*Ibid.* 24 [22].

² *Ibid.* 20 [19].

³ Dion. Alex. ap. Euseb. vii. vii.

⁴ Firm. ap. Cyp. *Ep.* lxxv. 20 [lxxiv. 19]. Comp. lxxiii. 20 [lxxii. 23]; and the judgments of the bishops at the council of Carthage, *passim*.

perhaps with less probability, as early as 186, that Africa forsook what Firmilian calls the erroneous custom, for the stringent discipline of the East. St. Augustine persisted in treating the decision of this council as opposed to all tradition and to the practice of the whole world, and says that when St. Cyprian ‘sought with all his learning for an authority worth following,’ he could find nothing but this solitary council to support him.⁵ St. Vincent of Lerins, likewise, assuming that heretical baptisms were valid, affirms that Agrippinus, ‘the first of all mortal men,’ maintained his decree for rebaptizing, against the Bible, the Church, the opinion of contemporary priests, and the tradition of earlier times.⁶ But the testimony of Firmilian, who lived in the East, not only earlier than St. Vincent but also than St. Augustine, is conclusive that the real tradition and the generality of practice was on the side of the decree. It is moreover supported by the distinct evidence of Tertullian and the Apostolical Canons. St. Augustine makes the most of the admission of St. Cyprian and the bishops at Carthage that heretics had often been received in Africa without a fresh baptism;⁷ but probably this was a custom of laxity of practice, rather than the deliberate rule of the African Church. If the decision of Agrippinus had been utterly opposed to the views of all Christendom, it would scarcely have been accepted without demur;

⁵ Aug. *De Bapt.* II. vii. 12, ix. 14; III. ii. 3, xii. 17; IV. vi. 8, 9.

⁶ Quoniam igitur venerabilis memoriæ Agrippinus Carthaginensis episcopus, primus omnium mortaliū, contra divinum canonem, contra universalis ecclesiæ regulam,

contra sensum omnium consacerdotum, contra morem atque instituta majorum rebaptizandum esse censebat.—Vin. Lirin. *Adv. Hæres.* vi.

⁷ Aug. *De Bapt.* III. v. 7; IV. vi. 8; V. i. 1; VII. xxv. 49, &c.

yet that it was we know from St. Cyprian, who says that, from the time it passed, heretics gladly received the true baptism, and that thousands had so been received into the catholic Church.⁸

Further West the acceptance of baptisms which were not strictly orthodox had become commoner even than in Africa, as appears from the controversy which arose in the middle of the century. Rufinus says that the dispute began in the time of Pope Cornelius (251–252);⁹ but the first distinct record of active proceedings is that of an attempt on the part of Pope Stephen (253–257) to dictate to Firmilian of Cæsarea, Helenus of Tarsus, and other Eastern bishops, that they should cease to baptize those who came over from heresy. The details of the communications are not preserved, but the result was that the Eastern bishops refused to accept his counsel, whereupon Stephen resented their lack of subordination to himself, and wrote to break off communion with them.¹

A letter to Magnus, a layman, in about the year 254, is the first indication of St. Cyprian's part in the controversy. Magnus had written to ask whether converts from Novatianism were to be included among the heretics who 'ought, after profane washing, to be baptized and sanctified in the catholic Church, by the legitimate, true, and only baptism of the Church.' 'Concerning which matter,' says St. Cyprian, 'so far as the capacity of my faith, and the sanctity and truth of the holy Scripture suggests, I answer that no heretics and schismatics whatsoever have any power or authority. . . . Since the Church alone hath the life-giving

⁸ Cyp. *Ep.* lxxiii. [lxxii.] 3.

⁹ Ruf. *Hist. Ecc.* vii. ii.

¹ Euseb. vii. 5; Firm. ap. Cyp. *Ep.* lxxv. 26 [lxxiv. 25].

water and the power of baptizing and cleansing men, whoso says that anyone can be baptized and sanctified by Novatian must first show and prove that Novatian is in the Church or presides over the Church.’² Now Novatian had been ordained priest before his lapse, and subsequently had been consecrated a bishop by genuine bishops, although in schismatical rivalry to the true Pope, Cornelius. There was no question, therefore, of Novatian’s actual orders. Nor would it seem that there was any question in the mind of Magnus as to the principle of rejecting heretical baptism. The whole point was whether Novatian was so far a heretic as to be without the Church. Cyprian asserts that he was, and the invalidity of his baptism seems to follow as a matter of course. It is important to notice this, for it is another evidence that the rule shortly to be enacted under St. Cyprian was not a novel one, but that which in theory at least was accepted already in Africa.

Soon after, in 255, some Numidian bishops consulted St. Cyprian generally on the subject of heretical and schismatical baptism, being themselves of opinion that it was invalid. He laid this inquiry before thirty-two bishops assembled, under his presidency, at Carthage. This synod is known as the fifth council of Carthage under Cyprian, and the first on baptism. The bishops decided that heretical baptism was entirely null. Cyprian embodied the decision in a formal letter written in the several names of all the bishops to their Numidian brethren. The argument is the simple one that the power of sacramental grace resides only in the Church, that heretics are outside, and consequently cannot possess it.³

² *Ep.* lxxix. [lxxv.]

³ *Ep.* lxx. [lxxix.]

St. Cyprian wrote a similar reply in his own name to Quintus, a Bishop of Mauritania, who had sent at about the same time to ask his opinion.⁴

Shortly after, probably early in 256, a larger council met at Carthage, the sixth under Cyprian and the second on baptism. It was attended by seventy-one bishops. St. Cyprian addressed a brief letter afterwards to Pope Stephen, in the name generally of the whole council, enclosing with it copies of the synodical letter of the previous council and his own epistle to Magnus. This letter to Stephen is written in very careful and temperate language, and with a tone of respectful deference, 'to confer with the gravity and wisdom' of the Pope. But the decision of the African bishops is in no sense submitted to the revision of Stephen as a judge. Their mind was made up. The object of the communication with the Pope was evidently only to put the matter in such a form as should prevent a rupture. Therefore, without attempting to force the same discipline on Rome, St. Cyprian, after an over-sanguine expression of belief that Stephen will approve, suggests that, if he does not, they may agree to differ. 'We know that some will not lay aside what they have once imbibed, nor easily change their resolves, but keeping the bond of peace and concord with their colleagues, retain certain practices of their own which have been once adopted among them.'⁵

Stephen did not receive the missive in at all the conciliatory spirit in which it was sent. The deferential tone was not enough for one who wanted to exercise an autocratic rule. Either then, or later, he refused to admit a deputation of African bishops, who had made the journey on purpose, 'even to the speech of an

⁴ *Ep.* lxxi. [lxx.]

⁵ *Ep.* lxxii. [lxxi.]

ordinary conference.’⁶ He called Cyprian a false Christ, a false apostle, a deceitful worker;⁷ and he wrote a very angry reply, of which we only have fragments referred to in the Cyprian correspondence. St. Cyprian quotes one sentence verbatim, where the Roman bishop attempts once more to govern his brethren with the authority of a dictator. ‘If, then,’ he says, ‘any shall come to you from any heresy whatsoever, let there be no innovations beyond what has been handed down, namely, that hands be laid on such to repentance; since those who are properly heretics do not baptize such as come to them from one another, but only admit them to communion.’⁸

Stephen’s arrogance had no other effect on St. Cyprian than to make him affirm the opposite opinion with increased dignity. He sent a copy of the Pope’s letter to Pompey, Bishop of Sabrata, who seems to have taken a special interest in the result of the deputation; and, with the copy, a severe criticism of Stephen’s conduct, which he regarded as the outcome of a perverse self-sufficiency. ‘It happeneth through a love of presumption and obstinacy,’ he says, ‘that men will maintain their own positions, though erroneous and false, rather than yield to what is right and true, but another’s.’ And he concludes by a simple reassertion of the exact contrary of the Pope’s injunction. ‘Having, dearest brother, searched out and discovered the truth, what we observe and maintain is this, that all, converted to the Church from whatsoever heresy, be baptized with the alone legitimate baptism of the Church, except

⁶ *Ep.* lxxv. 26 [lxxiv. 28].

⁷ *Ibid.* 27 [26].

⁸ *Ep.* lxxiv. [lxxiii.] 1.

such as had been baptized before in the Church, and then had gone over to heretics.'⁹

St. Cyprian was in correspondence also with Jubaianus, another bishop, who had sent him a document arguing for the validity of baptism by heretics. Cyprian made it the occasion for composing a letter which fully states his complete views, and is, in fact, a little treatise on the subject.¹ It was written soon after the second council on baptism, and probably before the answer from Stephen had arrived. In many respects it is the most interesting of the series of letters, representing as it does the entire argument which Cyprian had at his command, as he viewed the question under every possible aspect of Scripture, reason, custom, and policy. The case, as he states it, is a strong one, allowing the principle upon which it is built, that heretics are outside the Church. Jubaianus, whose mind before was perhaps neutral, was convinced by it.²

In anticipation, no doubt, of complications with Rome, St. Cyprian now summoned all the bishops within reach; and eighty-seven, from Africa, Numidia and Mauritania, met in synod at Carthage, in the presence of several of the clergy and laity. It was, perhaps, as yet only the autumn of 256. Possibly the Pope's answer had not been received, for it does not seem to have been read to the council, although the letter which had been written to him, and the correspondence with Jubaianus, were formally laid before it. But, at any rate, the peremptory tone of the Roman bishop was well understood. It is manifestly alluded to in St. Cyprian's opening address, when he says, 'No one of us setteth

⁹ *Ep.* lxxiv. [lxxiii.]

¹ *Ep.* lxxiii. [lxxii.]

² Cyprian's Address to Council. Carthag. vii.

himself up as a bishop of bishops, or by tyrannical terror forceth his colleagues to a necessity of obeying; inasmuch as every bishop, in the free use of his liberty and power, has the right of forming his own judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he can himself judge another.' On this principle, he invited the bishops present severally to declare their opinion, 'judging no one, nor depriving any one of the right of communion, if he differ from us.' It must have been an impressive scene when each of the eighty-seven bishops rose in turn, and delivered his judgment. Some expressed it by quotations from Scripture on the unity of the Church and the ministerial commission of the apostolate, some by brief logical reasoning, some by trenchant denunciation of heresy, some by a bare statement of opinion. But they were unanimous in rejecting heretical baptism. St. Cyprian, with characteristic force and gentleness, summed up his own judgment as being 'that, according to the testimony of the gospel and the apostles, heretics, being called the adversaries of Christ and antichrists, when they come to the Church, are to be baptized with the one baptism of the Church, that they may be made of adversaries friends, and of antichrists Christians.' This council is known as the seventh under Cyprian and the third upon baptism.³

While obtaining the judgment of the bishops in his

³ The sentences of the bishops are preserved, probably in a condensed form, but retaining their characteristic expressions, by St. Augustine in his *De Baptismo*, III. iii.-ix., vi., vii. He adds his own reply to each. They are usually printed in St. Cyprian's *Works*. The

Latin is also given in Routh's *Rel. Sac.* vol. iii. Nathaniel Marshall's *Dissertation upon the case of heretical and schismatical baptism*, appended to the Acts of Carthage, in his edition of *The Works of St. Cyprian*, 1717, pp. 256-278, is excellent.

own part of the world, Cyprian also sought support from those of the East, by sending one of his deacons to Firmilian at Caesarea with a full account of the dispute. The latter, already indignant at Stephen's action towards himself, wrote Cyprian a long epistle which ranks in importance with Cyprian's own letter to Jubaianus.⁴ Entirely repudiating the Pope's claim to universal authority, he argues the question on its own merits with great power, and with none of the diffidence which made Cyprian contemplate the possibility that some might arrive at a different opinion. This letter probably did not reach Carthage till after the great council had dispersed, for no allusion was made to it. The bishops may not have known how entirely the East was with them.

The Pope, Stephen, eventually, if he had not already done so, broke off all converse with both Churches, and it is generally supposed that he attempted formally to excommunicate them. Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, tried to act the part of peacemaker, and to deter Stephen from violence, by reminding him that there was considerable authority for the other view.⁵ His efforts, however, were fruitless, and no further communications seem to have passed during the short remainder of Stephen's pontificate.

In the days of Stephen's successor, Xystus, Dionysius renewed his efforts, writing to the Pope in person, and also to two Roman priests, Dionysius and Philemon, with whom he had already once before discussed

⁴ Firm. ap. Cyp. *Ep.* lxxv. [lxxiv.] The Latin translation, in which it now alone exists, is so strongly marked by the style of St. Cyprian, that there can be no doubt

that he was its translator. But there subsist clear traces of its Greek original. See *Lib. of Fathers, in loc.*

⁵ Euseb. vii. iv., v.

the question. His own views do not seem to have been strongly enlisted on either side, and it was therefore as a mediator, rather than as a partisan, that he interposed in the quarrel. That he was not vehemently for re-baptism is clear from a letter to Xystus, asking him how he was to deal with a certain person who had received heretical baptism, apparently not in the orthodox form at all, but had long been a communicant in the Church. Dionysius had assured him that this would cover the irregularity; but, not being able to satisfy the man's scruples, he was still afraid to baptize him without the Pope's consent.⁶ Xystus' reply is not extant, either to this letter or to those on the general question in its relation to the breach between the Churches. But Pontius, one of St. Cyprian's deacons, who wrote his master's life, speaks there of Xystus as a 'good and pacific priest,' from which it may probably be gathered that at least external communion was restored.⁷

St. Jerome says that the African bishops after a time rescinded their decree.⁸ But, as Dr. Pusey points out, this is evidently a mistake; for, if it were true, St. Augustine would certainly have known of it, and would as certainly have mentioned it in support of his own contention for the validity of heretical baptism. Augustine does in one place suggest that Cyprian may have changed his mind, but this is professedly only a supposition without evidence.⁹ It is altogether improbable. Africa did yield to the Roman view in later days, but this was when others had succeeded to the sees of St. Cyprian and his colleagues, and when Rome

⁶ Euseb. vii. ix.

⁷ See Smith and Wace's *Dict. Christ. Biog.* vol. iv. p. 1198.

⁸ Jer. *Adv. Lucif.* 23.

⁹ Aug. *Ep.* xciii. 38 [xlviii.], *Ad Vincent.* See Pusey, Note on Tertullian, *Lib. of Fathers*, vol. i. p. 294 n.

had accumulated greater strength as a moving power in Christendom.

The argument of St. Cyprian and his party was perfectly logical and consistent, and its leading features can be summarised briefly.

They rested their case primarily on the fact that there is but one faith and one baptism. Then they argued that the one baptism can only be in the one Church where the one faith exists. 'If,' says St. Cyprian, 'His Church is "a garden enclosed" and "a fountain sealed,"¹ how can he who is not in the Church enter into the same garden or drink of its fountain? As in that baptism of the world whereby its old iniquity was cleansed, he who was not in the ark of Noah could not be saved by water, so neither now can he appear to be saved by baptism who has not been baptized in the Church which is founded in the unity of the Lord after the mystery of the one ark.'²

Under one of its aspects baptism is the means of regeneration. 'It is plain,' says Cyprian, 'that they who are not in the Church of Christ are accounted among the dead; nor can another be quickened by him who himself liveth not, in that there is one Church which, having obtained the grace of eternal life, both liveth for ever, and quickeneth the people of God.'³ And so Firmilian: 'If the spouse of Christ, which is the catholic Church, is one, she it is who alone giveth birth to sons of God. For there are not many spouses of Christ, since the apostle says, "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin

¹ Cant. iv. 12.

[lxxii.], and Conc. Carth. vii. *passim*.

² *Ep.* lxxiv. 14 [lxxiii. 11]. Comp.

³ *Ep.* lxxi. [lxx.] 1; comp. lxxiv. 8 [lxxiii. 6].

lxix. [lxxv.] 3, lxx. [lxix.], lxxiii.

to Christ.”⁴ . . . We see that one person is everywhere spoken of, because the spouse also is one. But the synagogue of heretics is not one with us, because neither is the spouse an adulteress and harlot. Wherefore neither can she bring forth sons to God; unless, indeed, as Stephen seems to think, heresy brings them forth and exposes them, and the Church takes them up when exposed, and nourishes as her own those whom she brought not forth; whereas she cannot be the mother of strange children.’⁵

From another aspect baptism is the pardon of sins. ‘How,’ asks St. Cyprian, ‘can he cleanse and sanctify the water, who is himself unclean, and with whom the Holy Spirit is not? . . . Or how can he that baptizeth give remission of sins to another, who cannot himself free himself from his own sins, out of the Church?’ This is a line of argument which recurs in the epistles and the judgments of the bishops.⁶

St. Cyprian saw clearly that, if baptism were allowed to heretics, other sacraments must follow. ‘If,’ he says, ‘by virtue of a perverted faith any without can be baptized and obtain remission of sins, by virtue of the same faith he might obtain the Holy Ghost also; and it needeth not that, when he cometh, hands be laid upon him that he may obtain the Holy Ghost and be sealed.’⁷ Nor could the concession stop here. ‘He,’ says St. Firmilian, ‘who concedes and assigns to heretics such great and heavenly privileges of the Church, what else does he than hold communion with them for whom he maintains and claims so much grace? And

⁴ 2 Cor. xi. 2.

⁵ *Ep.* lxxv. [lxxiv.] 14.

⁶ *Ep.* lxx. [lxix.], lxxi. [lxx.] 1,

lxix. 10. [lxxv. 11], Conc. Carth. vii. *passim*.

⁷ *Ep.* lxxiii. [lxxii.] 6.

in vain doth he any longer hesitate to consent and be partaker with them in the rest, to join in their assemblies, and mingle his prayers with theirs, and set up a common altar and sacrifice.’⁸

Scripture and reason, therefore, seemed to combine with custom in dictating an absolute rejection of all baptism but the Church’s own. It was no case with the African and Eastern bishops of repeating a sacrament which could only be conferred once. ‘We,’ St. Cyprian insisted, ‘say that such as come thence are not rebaptized but baptized by us. For neither do they receive anything there where there is nothing, but they come to us that they may receive here where is all grace and truth.’⁹

Strongly, however, as Cyprian held this view, he was far from driving it to any unreasonable extremes. He freely allowed that God might be expected to extend His indulgence to such as ignorantly believed that heretical baptism was true. Therefore, he was quite willing to suppose that those who had been received from heresy without the Church’s baptism, and had already died, would, by the mercy of the Lord, be reckoned to have fallen asleep in the Church.¹ Firmilian was scarcely disposed to allow so much. He preferred to regard those who had died thus as in a similar position to catechumens preparing for baptism. But he, too, fully admitted that there was a vast difference between wilful and unwilful heresy, which would be taken into account in the judgment of those who had received heretical baptism.²

⁸ *Ep.* lxxv. 18 [lxxiv. 17].

¹ *Ep.* lxxiii. 20 [lxxii. 23].

⁹ *Ep.* lxxi. [lxx.] 1; comp. lxxii. [lxxi.] 1, lxxiii. [lxxii.] 1.

² *Firm. ap. Cyp. Ep.* lxxv. 22, 24 [lxxiv. 21, 22].

In the discussion of the subject in Cyprian's letters, heresy and schism are somewhat confused. The schisms with which he was familiar were too formidable and antagonistic to form a class apart from heresy. Firmilian appears to draw a distinction between those who had been brought up in heresy, and those who had lapsed from the true faith into schism. But the fact of the baptism being given by one who had received apostolic orders made no difference in his estimate of its value if the baptizer had lapsed. 'We have judged,' says he, 'that those also are to be accounted unbaptized, who had been baptized by such as had before been bishops in the catholic Church, and afterwards assumed to themselves the powers of their clerical ordination.'³ Whatever difference was recognised between heresy and schism, the Eastern and African rule was the same for both. The baptism was null.

Lay Church baptism is not so much as mentioned in the letters of Cyprian or Firmilian, or in the speeches of the bishops at Carthage. St. Basil, a century after, asserted that both Cyprian and Firmilian held that those who separated from the Church lost their power to baptize, 'because they became laymen.'⁴ But as there is no such statement in their extant epistles, St. Basil, who gives no authority for it, was probably mistaken as to the fact. St. Cyprian says in one place that priests who had lapsed ought only to be received back to lay communion,⁵ but this is quite a different thing from saying that they 'became laymen' when they fell

³ Firm. ap. Cyp. *Ep.* lxxv. 24 [lxxiv. 22].

⁴ *Ad Amphilochoch. can. i.* The original of the whole passage in which

the sentence occurs is quoted at length below, in the note on p. 83, col. 2.

⁵ *Ep.* lxxii. [lxxi.] 2.

away. There is every reason to conclude that the subject of lay baptism never came before St. Cyprian and the others at all. If it had, it must certainly have been referred to, at least incidentally, as having some bearing on the points in dispute. There is no reason for thinking it was likely to have arisen. 'Even heretics themselves,' says Nathaniel Marshall, 'had then no notion of doing anything within their several (pretended) Churches without the episcopal fiat: so that they always had bishops amongst them, whenever they spread or had any considerable number adhering to them.'⁶ Nothing can be argued either way as to what the judgment of the Eastern and African bishops might have been if they had considered lay baptism. 'It was very possible,' says Marshall again, 'for a man of their opinion as to the nullity of heretical baptisms, to have held the validity of baptisms administered by laymen within the Church. . . . The question of lay baptism *in* the Church is entirely distinct from the question of heretical baptism *out* of it.'⁷

That the mere invocation of the Name of the Blessed Trinity is of itself sufficient for valid baptism, independent of other qualifications, was clearly repudiated by St. Firmilian, although only expressly in relation to heterodoxy. 'That also is unreasonable,' he says, 'that they think no inquiry is to be made who was the baptizer, for that the baptized may have obtained grace by the invocation of the Trinity, the Names of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. . . . Who is there in the Church wise or perfect, who would either maintain or believe this, that the mere invocation of the Names would suffice for the remission of sins and

⁶ Marshall, *Cyprian's Works*, p. 258.

⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 256, 258.

the sanctification of baptism? Whereas this assuredly then profits when both he who baptizes has the Holy Ghost, and the baptism itself also is appointed by the Holy Ghost.’⁸ According to this principle it is difficult to see how Firmilian could have accepted lay baptism. Certainly he could not have accepted it in some of the extremest forms in which its validity has been claimed in modern times.

The position of Stephen can only be partially gathered from the letters of his opponents. Marshall conjectures that he did not know of the Eastern rule, embodied in such canons as the Apostolical; ‘otherwise (rash and choleric as he was) he would scarce have borne so hard upon a practice which had such good supports and such early precedents.’⁹ He can scarcely, however, have remained in ignorance after his communications with the East, though he may very likely have underrated the weight of the Eastern tradition. But probably he was chiefly at issue at first with the other bishops as to the effect of heresy in separating from the Church. The Western heresies had for the most part been of a less deadly character than the Eastern, and it would not have been unnatural if heresy was not viewed in exactly the same light at Rome as at Cæsarea and Carthage. The African bishops said that heretical baptism could only be defended on the plea that heretics had a Church, that is, that they had not lost communion with the catholic Church.¹ Stephen would very likely have originally agreed to this way of putting the matter. But he would have con-

⁸ Firm. ap. Cyp. *Ep.* lxxv. [lxxiv.] 9.

¹ Cyp. *Ep.* lxx. [lxix.] 2.

² Marshall, *Works of Cyprian*, p. 270.

ceded fellowship in the Church to some who seemed to the other prelates to have absolutely forfeited it.

As time went on, and the contention waxed hot, the Pope got exasperated. Then, certainly, he carried his arguments further, and spoke of the qualification of the minister as if it was a matter of indifference to the validity of baptism. This appears from the letters both of Firmilian and Cyprian. The latter says that their adversaries 'attribute the effect of baptism to the majesty of the Name, so that they who are wheresoever and howsoever baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ, must be deemed to be renewed and sanctified.'² This statement seems to preclude limitation, especially as St. Cyprian speaks of it as covering baptisms by Marcion, Valentinus, and Apelles,³ which would include, in certain cases at least, the ministrations of those who had no kind of orders. Therefore Stephen in the end would perhaps have accepted lay baptism even when aggravated by heresy,—any baptism, in fact, which recited the Name of the Blessed Trinity. Yet the formal discussion did not pass the bounds of the effect of heresy by itself, without further complications.

It is constantly said that the whole question concerning the minister of baptism was considered and settled in the time of St. Cyprian. Nothing can less accurately describe the facts of the case. The whole question was never before the disputants at all. Some phases of it, which appeared later, would not have suggested themselves to their minds. If Stephen in his irritated humour laid down principles which would have covered almost all possible cases, it was a decision

² *Ep.* lxxiv. 7 [lxxiii. 5]; comp. lxxv. 9, 12, 19 [lxxiv. 9, 12, 18].

³ *Ep.* lxxiii. [lxxii.] 4, lxxiv. 9 [lxxiii. 7].

arrived at in the impulse of heated argument, without due consideration of all it involved. Certainly, too, nothing was settled, as between Rome on the one part, and Africa with the East on the other. Both emphatically held to their own opinion after as before.

Modern Western critics have done scant justice to the Eastern view. It is often regarded almost as a strange eccentricity of St. Cyprian's, the one blot of a glorious episcopate. This is very much St. Augustine's way of speaking about it, and perhaps he is responsible for inaugurating the unjust estimate which is so curiously current. Certainly it was no peculiarity of St. Cyprian that he rejected heretical baptism. With him were associated a multitude of bishops who came from dioceses spread along the whole coast of Africa from the Atlantic to the Red Sea. On the same side were all the bishops of the East, so far as can be gathered. St. Vincent of Lerins, who wrote under a pronounced Roman bias, was constrained to admit not only the genius of the African bishops, but also the weight of their numbers, the great appearance of truth in their arguments, and the force of their scriptural quotations, which would have seemed to him invincible if it were not for the novelty of the doctrine.⁴ But novelty is just a charge which cannot be brought against it. There was the entire tradition of Eastern Christendom on its side, if the word of the Eastern bishops is to be believed, and if the Apostolical Canons

⁴ Imo vero tanta vis ingenii adfuit, tanta eloquentiæ flumina, tantus adsertorum numerus, tanta veri similitudo, tanta divinæ legis oracula, sed plane novo ac malo more intellecta, ut mihi omnis ista

conspiratio nullo modo destrui potuisse videatur, nisi sola tanti moliminis causa ipsa illa suscepta, ipsa defensa, ipsa laudata novitatis professio destituisset. — Vincent. Lirin. *Adv. Hæres.* vi.

are to be taken as anything better than an impudent forgery. Rome was the real innovator, and as yet Rome was not strong enough to override the rest of the Church.⁵

Although Africa did at a subsequent date yield to the Roman custom, it never became that of the catholic Church as a whole. The East consistently held its ground in the main without change. It is to this day committed by the quinisext council of 691,—a council of œcumenical authority with the East—to the decrees of the council of Carthage, and generally to the opinion enunciated in the epistles of St. Cyprian.⁶ The tendency in a divided Christendom is for each great division, forgetting the rest, to elevate its own practice into a universal rule. The long continued usage of the West, in accepting baptism by heretical priests, seems to have made her forget that the consent of the East has never

⁵ I ought to state that a very different view of the controversy is taken by the Archbishop of Canterbury in his articles on St. Cyprian and others, in Smith and Wace's *Dictionary of Christian Biography*. Dr. Benson's estimate of the African position is not a favourable one. Its general tenor is summed up in a few words spoken by his Grace in a sermon preached before the bishops assembled for the Lambeth Conference, in 1888. He there says: 'When every petty city of Africa had its bishop, and the doctrine of episcopacy was strongest, the effectiveness of the episcopate was lowest. A Cyprian had no difficulty in obtaining the unanimous vote, a vote contrary to Scripture principle, Church tradi-

tion, and the subsequent ruling of the Catholic world,—a vote that heretical and schismatical baptism was void.'—Sermon at Westminster Abbey, July 2, 1888; *Guardian*, July 4, 1888, p. 991.

⁶ "Ἐτι μὴν καὶ τὸν ὑπὸ Κυπριανοῦ τοῦ γενομένου ἀρχιεπισκόπου τῆς Ἀφρῶν χώρας καὶ μάρτυρος, καὶ τῆς καθ' αὐτὸν συνόδου ἐκτεθέντα κανόνα, ὃς ἐν τοῖς τῶν προειρημένων προέδρων τόποις, καὶ μόνον, κατὰ τὸ παραδοθὲν αὐτοῖς ἔθος ἐκράτησε, καὶ μηδενὶ ἐξείναι τοὺς προδηλωθέντας παραχαράττει κανόνας ἢ ἀθετεῖν ἢ ἐτέρους παρὰ τοὺς προκειμένους παραδέχασθαι κανόνας ψευδεπιγράφως ὑπὸ τινῶν συντεθέντας τῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν κατηλείειν ἐπιχειρησάντων.—Conc. Trull. can. 2.

been obtained. However much it may commend itself to the Western mind, it must be remembered that the East can claim a longer tradition for the opposite view. The difference need not necessarily involve a charge of error. The matter falls within the limits of a high exercise of the Church's power of binding and loosing. Where she has never arrived at a universal agreement, what may be bound in one place may possibly be loosed in another. So, in studying the old controversy of the third century, it must not be thought that either side was flying in the face of catholic decrees, or was absolutely in the wrong. Nor, since both sides stood to their ground, can it be said that a victory was gained by either. Africa and the East seem to have had the best of the argument, Rome was loudest in positive assertion. But the question remained, as it still remains, unsettled by a unanimous vote of the Church.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GREAT COUNCILS AND FATHERS.—CENT. IV.

Bishops, Priests, and Deacons—Heretical baptism in the East: Councils of Nicæa, Laodicea, Constantinople; Basil, Athanasius, Epiphanius, &c.—Lay baptism in the East: Basil, Chrysostom, Epiphanius, Gregory Nazianzen, Story of Athanasius, &c.—Heretical baptism in the West: Councils of Arles, Carthage; Siricius, Ambrose, Optatus, Pacian—Lay baptism in the West: Councils of Elvira, Carthage; Optatus, Jerome—St. Augustine: baptism by heretical priests; by lay Churchmen; by the unbaptized and others—Summary.

IN the fourth century the discussions upon the minister of baptism covered a wide range.

On one point all were agreed, that the bishop was the source of all baptismal authority. ‘Without chrism and the command of the bishop,’ says St. Jerome, ‘neither priest nor deacon have the right to baptize.’¹ ‘Although priests do it,’ says St. Ambrose, ‘yet the fount of their ministry is from the chief priest.’² One practical evidence of the extent to which solemn baptism was still reserved to bishops is given by the fact that when baptisteries were built they were generally confined to cathedrals where bishops would officiate. They did not become common in ordinary churches till the eighth or ninth centuries.³ It was a

¹ Sine chrismate et episcopi jussione, neque presbyter, neque diaconus jus habeant baptizandi.—Jer. *Contra Lucif.* 9.

² Licet enim et presbyteri fece-

rint, tamen exordium ministerii a summo est sacerdote.—Amb. *De Sacram.* III. i.

³ Martene, *De Ant. Rit.* I. i. 2.

noticeable peculiarity of Rome that they existed there at an earlier period. Marcellus, who was Pope from 307 to 309, appointed twenty-five churches in that city for the baptism of pagans.⁴

The licence which priests had to baptize, under their bishops, was sometimes extended to deacons. This was the case even in the East, where baptism regulations were always more stringent than in the West. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, in the middle of the fourth century, speaks of persons going up for baptism to deacons, as well as to bishops and priests.⁵ Epiphanius, however, at the same period, says deacons must not celebrate any mystery, but only assist at the celebration.⁶ St. Chrysostom, also, a little later speaks similarly of baptism and the eucharist as being accomplished only by a priest.⁷ But perhaps neither of them were including cases of urgency. It may be that deacons were considered to have the power to baptize, but were not allowed to exercise it except in necessity.

In the West probably the restrictions were less exact. St. Thomas Aquinas says it is recorded of St. Laurence, that he baptized many when he was a deacon;⁸ and, if he refers to the celebrated martyr, this was in the middle of the third century. At the council of Elvira, in Spain, in the early part of the fourth,⁹ it was decreed that if a deacon in charge of a

⁴ *Liber Pontificalis*, Vit. Marcelli.

⁵ Κατὰ γὰρ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦ βαπτίσματος, ὅταν προσέλθῃς ἐπὶ τῶν ἐπισκόπων, ἢ πρεσβυτέρων, ἢ διακόνων· ἀπανταχοῦ γὰρ ἡ χάρις, καὶ ἐν κόμαις, καὶ ἐν πόλεσι· ἐπειδὴ οὐκ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἡ χάρις, ἀλλ' ἐκ Θεοῦ δι' ἀνθρώπων ἡ δόσις, &c. Cyr. Hieros. *Catechesis*, xvii. 35.

⁶ Epiph. *Hæres.* lxxix.

⁷ Chrys. *De Sac.* III. v. 187.

⁸ Th. Aquin. *Summa*, III. lxxvii. 1.

⁹ The date given in the extant versions of its own acta is 324. Hefele and others reject this, and 305, 313, and 335 have all been suggested as the real date. But it is not certain that 324 is wrong.

congregation should baptize any without a bishop or priest, the bishop is to perfect them by benediction. This may mean confirmation, but certainly it was not rebaptism. If the person died before this episcopal benediction he was not excluded from a position among the faithful departed.¹ Therefore in the Spanish portion of the Church, at least, there was no question about the validity of baptism administered even in health by a deacon.

The great difficulty still was the treatment of heretical baptism. Several times in the fourth century councils had to determine in particular cases how it was to be dealt with, especially in the East. We have the record of their decisions in conciliar canons, but none of the arguments and motives which led to their enactment.

The general council of Nicæa, in 325, decreed that the Paulianists or Samosatenes, an Eastern body of heretics, should be rebaptized.² Paul, their founder, had been bishop of Antioch, and therefore the question was not one of original ordination. If St. Athanasius is right, that they baptized in the Name of the Trinity,³ the rejection must have been entirely because they used the words in a heretical sense. But St. Augustine and Pope Innocent both believed that they mutilated the

¹ Si quis diaconus regens plebem sine episcopo vel presbytero aliquos baptizaverit, episcopus eos per benedictionem perficere debet: quod si ante de sæculo recesserint, sub fide qua quis credidit poterit esse justus.—Conc. Elib. can. 77.

² Περὶ τῶν Παυλιανισάντων, εἴτα προσφυγόντων τῇ καθολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ,

ὄρος ἐκτέθειται ἀναβαπτίζεσθαι αὐτοὺς ἐξέπικτος· εἰ δέ τινες ἐν τῷ παρεληλυθότι χρόνῳ ἐν τῷ κλήρῳ ἐξηγάσθησαν, εἰ μὲν ἄμεμπτοι καὶ ἀνεπίληπτοι φανεῖεν, ἀναβαπτισθέντες χειροτονείσθωσαν ὑπὸ τοῦ τῆς καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐπισκόπου.—Conc. Nic. I. can. 19.

³ Ath. *Adv. Arianos*, ii. 43.

formula,⁴ and this is most likely, since otherwise the decree perhaps would not have easily obtained the consent of the Western prelates at the council who were accustomed to allow the validity of heretical baptism. Therefore the decision may have nothing to do with the question of the minister. St. Jerome said that the Nicene council accepted all heretics save the disciples of Paul of Samosata;⁵ but it is straining the canon to make it sanction all it does not name, especially when only one sect is considered.

The council of Laodicea, in about the year 375, decreed that the baptism of Novatians, Photinians, and Quartodecimans was to be accepted, and that of the Phrygians or Montanists rejected.⁶ This is perhaps sufficiently explained by the fact that the later Montanists at any rate changed the words of administration; but it is uncertain whether they did so at this period,⁷ and it is to be observed that they alone, of the heretics mentioned, did not rise in episcopacy, and so never had true priests.

The second general council at Constantinople, in 381,

⁴ Aug. *De Hæres.* xlv. *Inn. Ep.* xxii. *Ad Episc. Maced.* v.

⁵ Synodus quoque Nicæna omnes hæreticos suscepit, exceptis Pauli Samosatani discipulis.—Jer. *Cont. Lucif.* 27.

⁶ Περὶ τοῦ τοὺς ἐκ τῶν αἱρέσεων, τοῦτ' ἔστι Ναυατιανῶν ἢ τοὺς Φωτεινιανῶν ἢ Τεσσαρεσκαίδεκατιτῶν, ἐπιστρεφόμενους, ἢ τε πιστοὺς τοὺς παρ' ἐκείνοις, μὴ προσδέχεται, πρὶν ἀναθεματίσῃσι πᾶσαν αἵρεσιν, ἐξαιρέτως δὲ ἐν ἧ κατείχοντο· καὶ τότε λοιπὸν τοὺς λεγομένους παρ' αὐτοῖς πιστοὺς ἐκμανθάνοντας τὰ τῆς πίστεως σύμβολα, χρισθέντας τε τῷ ἀγίῳ χρίσματι, οὕτω κοινωνεῖν τῷ μυστηρίῳ τῷ ἀγίῳ.—

Conc. Laod. can. 7. Περὶ τοῦ τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς αἱρέσεως τῶν λεγομένων Φρυγῶν ἐπιστρέφοντας, εἰ καὶ ἐν κλήρῳ νομιζομένῳ παρ' αὐτοῖς τυγχάνοιεν, εἰ καὶ μέγιστοι λέγοντο, τοὺς τοιούτους μετὰ πάσης ἐπιμελείας κατηχεῖσθαι τε καὶ βαπτίζεσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐπισκόπων τε καὶ πρεσβυτέρων.—*Ibid.* can. 8.

⁷ Athanasius says they baptized with the true formula, *Orat.* ii. 43, but this was a little earlier. Basil, *Ep.* clxxxviii., and Theoph. *In Luc.* xxiv. 45–53, say they altered it. Evidently at some period there was a change.

decided that the baptism of Arians, Macedonians, Sabbatians, Novatians, Quartodecimans, and Apollinarians was to be accounted valid, but not that of the Eunomians, Montanists, Sabellians, and others.⁸ Of these, all the first started in episcopacy, and none of the last that are named except the Eunomians. A special reason is given for refusing their baptism—that they used only one immersion.⁹

Bingham thought that all the conciliar decrees were based on the form of words used in administering baptism.¹ Brett as positively maintained that they rested on the validity of the orders of the administrator.² If valid orders weighed in the determination, it serves to explain why some heretical baptism was accepted and some not, which it is not easy to do by a mere comparison of the malignity of the heresies themselves. But Brett's assertion lacks confirmatory evidence, and

⁸ Ἀρειανούς μὲν, καὶ Μακεδονιανούς, καὶ Σαββατιανούς, καὶ Ναυατιανούς, τοὺς λέγοντας ἑαυτοὺς καθαρούς καὶ ἀριστεροὺς, καὶ τοὺς Τεσσαρεσκαίδεκαίτας, εἶπουν Τετραδίτας, καὶ Ἀπολλιναριστὰς δεχόμεθα . . . σφραγιζομένους ἤτοι χριστομένους πρῶτον τῷ ἁγίῳ μύρῳ. . . . Εὐνομιανούς μέντοι τοὺς εἰς μίαν κατάδυσιν βαπτιζομένους, καὶ Μοντανιστὰς τοὺς ἐνταῦθα λεγομένους Φρύγας, καὶ Σαβελλιανούς τοὺς υἰοπατορίαν διδάσκοντας, ἢ ἕτεραί τινα χαλεπὰ ποιῶντας, καὶ τὰς ἄλλας πᾶσας αἱρέσεις (ἐπειδὴ πολλοὶ εἰσιν ἐνταῦθα, μάλιστα οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλατῶν χώρας ἐρχόμενοι) πάντας τοὺς ἀπ' αὐτῶν θέλοντας προστίθεσθαι τῇ ὀρθοδοξίᾳ ὡς Ἑλληνας δεχόμεθα . . . καὶ τότε αὐτοὺς βαπτίζομεν.—Conc. Const. can. 7.

⁹ This apparently carried with

it a change in the formula: Epiph. *Hæres.* lxxvi.; Soc. *Hist.* v. xxiv. But Greek theologians regard the stress as being put on the single immersion itself, and therefore reject all baptism which is not given by a triple immersion. Balsamon concluded that the baptism of all who used a single immersion was to be regarded null: Nota autem ex præsentī canone, quod omnes una demersione baptizati rebaptizantur.—Bal. *in loc.* The Arians both changed the form and immersed only once, in later times, but not so early as this.

¹ Bingham, *Lay Baptism, Works*, 1844, vol. viii. pp. 63-66.

² Brett, *Inquiry into the Judgment of the Primitive Church &c.*, 1713, p. 83.

neither his view nor Bingham's can be regarded as correct alone. When the form was tampered with the baptisms would have been at once rejected, and possibly, too, where the priesthood was wholly wanting. The question did not certainly, however, turn exclusively on the orders of the minister, for the tradition of the East attached importance to heresy by itself as invalidating baptism. The difficulty here is to understand why all the great heresies were not put in the same category. Modern Greeks see a departure from the strictness of the Apostolical Canons in the decree of the second general council, and explain it as a mitigation for reasons of expediency. The Arians and Macedonians were flourishing in numbers and power. To reject them summarily might have exasperated them against the catholic body, have led to more grievous evils, and diminished the chance of their conversion.³ Policy may seem hardly an adequate motive to have weighed in so grave a matter with the fathers of the great councils. But, whatever led them to their conclusions, the result was that, by their acts, they affirmed the authority of the Church to decide upon the validity or invalidity of a baptism on other grounds than the bare use of the prescribed formula. And it is a fact, whether it was intentional or not, that baptism was in no case allowed to a body which had not started in episcopacy, with the possibility, therefore, of an ordained priesthood.

Of Eastern writers in the fourth century on the ministry of baptism, St. Basil ranks first, because the Church of the East has attached a value to his opinion beyond that which attaches to his name. In 375, shortly before the council of Constantinople, he dis-

³ See notes on Πηδάλιον, 1864, p. 53.

cussed the question of heretical baptism in epistles which were accepted as canonical by the council in Trullo, in 691. This council being called general by the East, these epistles have ever since been relied upon there as an authoritative guide as to what is to be accounted valid baptism.

Basil divided separatism into three classes: first, heresy, which concerned vital matters of faith; secondly, schism, which involved questions of ecclesiastical discipline; and, thirdly, unauthorised or rival assemblies not under the regulation of the Church. In accordance with ancient decrees, he absolutely rejected the baptism of genuine heretics, such as the Valentinians, Manichees, Marcionites, and Montanists. On the other hand he entirely accepted that of mere unregulated bodies, insisting that persons from these only needed reconciliation. The case of schismatics was not so easy to decide with assurance, as it is never easy to decide exactly where the border line in matters of faith and discipline has actually been passed. Basil's own inclination was towards strictness, and he was, therefore, in favour of rejecting schismatical baptism, wherever the Church had not expressly endorsed it. Thus, he would have Novatians, Encratites, and members of other like sects, baptized with catholic baptism when they came over to catholic communion. He was aware that he was here in opposition to the practice of Rome; but he maintained that reason was on his side, since the faith of these schismatics in the Being of God was so far from sound that it must imperil the validity of their baptism in the Name of the Trinity. Nevertheless, he willingly admitted that some of the cases might be doubtful and open to conciliar decision in their favour, as happened

at Constantinople soon after with regard to the Novatians. He further expressed his opinion that a rule about schism need not necessarily be an iron one, that where past custom or the general good of the Church seemed to demand an acknowledgment of schismatical baptism, it might reasonably be suffered to hold good. Therefore, he saw no inherent difficulty in a baptism being treated as lawful in one place and void in another. It was a matter for Church binding and loosing. Until a general agreement was arrived at, local jurisdiction must decide.

St. Basil does not in so many words state that ordination is a necessity for the minister of baptism. But it appears to be necessarily implied in a passage where he hazards the reason why Cyprian and Firmilian refused to accept the baptism of certain persons in the previous century. That he fathers upon them a reason which is not strictly theirs,⁴ does not affect the bearing of the quotation as showing his own view on lay baptism. ‘Those who are cut off,’ he says, ‘having become laymen, have power neither to baptize nor to lay on hands, nor are able to give to others the grace of the Holy Spirit which they themselves have lost; therefore they⁵ ordered that those who came from them to the Church, as being baptized by laymen, should be cleansed by the true baptism of the Church.’ The question before St. Basil was exclusively one of heresy, but it is impossible to avoid the inference suggested by this sentence, that he would entirely have rejected lay baptism of all kinds.⁶

⁴ See *ante*, p. 68.

⁵ *i.e.* Cyprian and Firmilian.

⁶ The effect of the canonical

epistles of St. Basil in influencing Eastern opinion has been so great that it seems right to give the

The other great theologians of the East at this period do not go into the matter with so much minute-

original of the most important passages on heretical baptism, in spite of their length. Some comments on them will be found in Πηδάλιον, pp. 55, 588, &c. The epistles are addressed to Basil's great friend, Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium. Those which contain the baptismal passages are Epistles clxxxviii. and cxcix ; but they are more often quoted under the title, 'Canons of Basil,' 1 and 47.

Τὸ μὲν οὖν περὶ τοὺς Καθαροὺς ζήτημα, καὶ εἴρηται πρότερον καὶ κυλῶς ἀπεμνημόνευσας, ὅτι δεῖ τῷ ἔθει τῶν καθ' ἐκάστην χώραν ἔπεσθαι, διὰ τὸ διαφόρως ἐνεχθῆναι περὶ τοῦ βαπτίσματος αὐτῶν, τοὺς τότε περὶ τούτων διαλαβόντας, τὸ δὲ τῶν Πεπουζηνῶν οὐδένα μοι λόγον ἔχει δοκεῖ, καὶ ἐθαύμασα πῶς κανονικὸν ὄντα τὸν μέγαν Διονύσιον, παρῆλθεν· ἐκείνο γὰρ ἔκριναν οἱ παλαιοὶ δέχεσθαι βάπτισμα, τὸ μηδὲν τῆς πίστεως παρεκβαῖνον. Ὄθεν τὰ μὲν, αἰρέσεις ὠνόμασαν, τὰ δὲ σχίσματα, τὰ δὲ παρασυναγωγάς. Αἰρέσεις μὲν, τοὺς παντελῶς ἀπερρήγμένους καὶ κατ' αὐτὴν τὴν πίστιν ἀπηλλοτριωμένους, σχίσματα δὲ, τοὺς δι' αἰτίας τινὰς ἐκκλησιαστικὰς καὶ ζητήματα ἰσμία πρὸς ἀλλήλους διενεχθέντας, παρασυναγωγὰς δὲ, τὰς συνάξεις, τὰς παρὰ τῶν ἀνυποτάκτων πρεσβυτέρων ἢ ἐπισκόπων, καὶ παρὰ τῶν ἀπαιδευτῶν λαῶν γινομένας· οἷον, εἴ τις ἐν πταίσματι ἐξετασθεῖς, ἀπεσχέθη τῆς λειτουργίας καὶ μὴ ὑπέκυψε τοῖς κανόσιν, ἀλλ' εαυτῷ ἐξεδίκησε τὴν προεδρίαν καὶ τὴν λειτουργίαν καὶ συναπῆλθον τούτῳ, τινὲς κατελιπόντες τὴν καθολικὴν ἐκκλησίαν, παρασυναγωγῇ τὸ τοιοῦτον. Σχίσμα δὲ τὸ περὶ

μετανοίας διαφόρως ἔχειν πρὸς τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, αἰρέσεις δὲ, οἷον τῶν Μανιχαίων καὶ Οὐαλεντίνων καὶ Μαρκιωνιστῶν, καὶ αὐτῶν τούτων τῶν Πεπουζηνῶν· εὐθὺς γὰρ περὶ αὐτῆς τῆς εἰς Θεὸν πίστεως ἔστιν ἡ διαφορά. Ἔδοξε τοίνυν τοῖς ἐξ ἀρχῆς, τὸ μὲν τῶν αἰρετικῶν, παντελῶς ἀθετησθαι, τὸ δὲ τῶν ἀποσχισθέντων, ὡς ἔτι ἐκ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ὄντων, παραδέξασθαι, τοὺς δὲ ἐν ταῖς παρασυναγωγαῖς, μετανοία ἀξιολόγῳ καὶ ἐπιστροφῇ βελτιωθέντας, συνάπτεσθαι πάλιν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ὥστε πολλάκις καὶ τοὺς ἐν βαθμῷ συναπελθόντας τοῖς ἀνυποτάκτοις, ἐπειδὴν μεταμεληθῶσιν, εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν παραδέχεσθαι τάξιν. Then, after mentioning the reason for regarding the Pepuzians as heretics, and the reason why Cyprian and Firmilian rejected the baptisms of Novatians and others, he continues : Οἱ μὲν γὰρ πρῶτοι ἀναχωρήσαντες, παρὰ τῶν πατέρων ἔσχον τὰς χειροτονίας, καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν αὐτῶν, εἶχον τὸ χάρισμα τὸ πνευματικόν, οἱ δὲ ἀπορράγυντες, λαϊκοὶ γενόμενοι, οὔτε τοῦ βαπτίζεσθαι, οὔτε τοῦ χειροτονεῖν εἶχον ἐξουσίαν, οὔτε ἠδύνατον χάριν Πνεύματος Ἁγίου ἐτέροις παρέχειν, ἢς αὐτοὶ ἐκπεπτώκασι· διὸ ὡς παρὰ λαϊκῶν βαπτιζομένους τοὺς παρ' αὐτῶν ἐκέλευσαν, ἐρχομένους ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, τῷ ἀληθινῷ βαπτίσματι τῷ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἀνακαθαίρεσθαι. Ἐπειδὴ δὲ ὅλως ἔδοξε ἰσμία τῶν κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν, οἰκονομίας ἕνεκα τῶν πολλῶν, δεχθῆναι αὐτῶν τὸ βάπτισμα, ἔστω δεκτόν. Then concerning the Encratites he says : Νομίζω τοίνυν, ὅτι ἐπειδὴ οὐδὲν ἔστι περὶ αὐτῶν φανερῶς διηγορευμένον, ἡμᾶς προσῆκεν ἀθετεῖν αὐτῶν τὸ

ness as St. Basil; but what they do say agrees in the main with his opinion.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem says plainly that heretics must be rebaptized, because their first baptism was no baptism at all.⁷

Didymus of Alexandria says heretics are to be baptized, mentioning particularly the Eunomians and the Phrygians; and he adds that this is not called rebaptism, because heretical baptism is not real.⁸

St. Athanasius is very distinct that there must be a right faith as well as a right form, in order to make

βάπτισμα, κἀν τις ἢ παρ' αὐτῶν εἰληφώς, προσιώντα τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ βαπτίζειν. Ἐὰν μέντοι μέλλῃ τῇ καθόλου οἰκονομίᾳ ἐμπόδιον ἔσσεσθαι τοῦτο, πάλιν τῷ ἔθει χρηστέον καὶ τοῖς οἰκονομήσασιν τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς πατράσιν ἀκολουθητέον· ὑφορῶμαι γὰρ μήποτε, ὡς βουλόμεθα ὀκνηροῦς αὐτοὺς περὶ τὸ βαπτίζειν ποιῆσαι, ἐμποδίσωμεν τοῖς σωζομένοις διὰ τὸ τῆς προτάσεως αὐστηρόν. Εἰ δὲ ἐκείνοι φυλάττουσι τὸ ἡμέτερον βάπτισμα, τοῦτο ἡμᾶς μὴ δυσωπεῖτω· οὐ γὰρ ἀντιδιδόναι αὐτοῖς ὑπεύθυνοι χάριν ἐσμεν, ἀλλὰ δουλεύειν ἀκριβείᾳ κανόνων. Παντὶ δὲ λόγῳ τυπωθήτω, τοὺς ἐπὶ τὸν βαπτισμὸν ἐκείνων προσερχομένους χρίεσθαι ὑπὸ πιστῶν δηλαδὴ, καὶ οὕτω προσιέναι τοῖς μυστηρίοις.—Can. 1.

Ἐγκρατῖται καὶ Σακκοφόροι καὶ Ἀποτακτῖται, τῷ αὐτῷ ὑπόκειται λόγῳ, ᾧ καὶ οἱ Ναυατιανοὶ, ὅτι περὶ μὲν ἐκείνων κανὼν ἐξεφωνήθη, εἰ καὶ διάφορος, τὰ δὲ κατὰ τοὺτους ἀποσεσιώπηται. Ἡμεῖς μὲν τοι ἐνὶ λόγῳ ἀναβαπτίζομεν τοὺς τοιοῦτους, εἰ δὲ παρ' ὑμῖν ἀπηγόρευται τοῦτο τὸ τοῦ ἀναβαπτισμοῦ, ὡς περ οὖν καὶ παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις, οἰκονομίας τινὸς ἕνεκα, ἀλλ' ὁ ἡμέτερος λόγος ἰσχυρὸν ἔχεται,

ὅτι, ἐπειδὴ ὡς περ Μαρκιωνιστῶν ἐστὶν ἀποβλάστημα ἢ κατ' αὐτοὺς αἵρεσις, βδελυσομέναν τὸν γάμον, καὶ ἀποστρεφομέναν τὸν οἶνον, καὶ τὴν κτίσιν τοῦ Θεοῦ μεμιασμένην εἶναι λεγόντων. Οὐ δεχόμεθα οὖν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἐὰν μὴ βαπτισθῶσιν εἰς τὸ ἡμέτερον βάπτισμα. Μὴ γὰρ λεγέτωσαν, ὅτι εἰς Πατέρα καὶ Υἱὸν καὶ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα βαπτίζονται, οἳ γε κακὸν ποιητὴν ὑποτιθέμενοι τὸν Θεὸν, ἐφαμίλλως τῷ Μαρκίῳ καὶ ταῖς λοιπαῖς αἵρέσεσιν, ὥστε ἐὰν ἀρέσῃ τοῦτο, δεῖ πλείονας ἐπισκόπους ἐν ταῦτῳ γενέσθαι, καὶ οὕτως ἐκθέσθαι τὸν κανόνα, ἵνα καὶ τῷ ποιῆσαντι τὸ ἀκίνδυνον ἦ, καὶ ὁ ἀποκρινόμενος τὸ ἀξιόπιστον ἔχη ἐν τῇ περὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἀποκρίσει.—Can. 47.

⁷ Εἰς κύριος, καὶ μία πίστις, καὶ ἐν βάπτισμα, μόνον γὰρ οἱ αἵρετικοὶ ἀναβαπτίζονται, ἐπειδὴ τὸ πρότερον οὐκ ἦν βάπτισμα.—Cyr. Hieros. *Catech.* i. 7.

⁸ Μετερχόμενοι τοίνυν εἰς τὴν ὀρθοδοξίαν, κἀν τυχὸν ὦσιν βεβαπτισμένοι, βαπτίζονται μὲν (οὐ γὰρ λέγομεν ἀναβαπτίζονται, ἐπειδὴ μὴ ἔχουσι τὸ ἀληθὲς βάπτισμα).—Did. *De Trin.* II. xvī.

baptism valid. 'It is much to be doubted,' he says, 'whether the baptism administered by our adversaries is valid. There are, indeed, the Names of the Father and the Son in it; but this is such a Father as having no Son of His substance, who is equal to Him in nature; and the Son they mean is really no Son, but only a mere creature made out of nothing. Can it be supposed that the Blessed Trinity should ratify such a baptism as this, in which the holy Name is not invoked but mocked? Can God's blessing follow a baptism of this kind? For let the Arians say the words as they please, they do not baptize in the Name of the Father and of the Son, but in the name of the Creator and one of His creatures. And, therefore, although they retain the words of the Scripture form, yet their baptism has, in truth, no more of Christ's ordinance and institution in it than there is of the nature of a creature in the divinity of God the Son. Not every one that says, "Lord, Lord," administers an effectual baptism. The words will not do where there is a professed denial of the faith. . . . And this is the case with regard to many other heresies too, where the words of the form only are used, quite contrary to the proper sense of them. Such baptisms as these, wanting that which is essential, the substance of that faith or belief which the form itself requires, are unprofitable and useless; and instead of benefiting those who use them, they rather render them more the children of wrath than they were before.'⁹

The Benedictine editor of St. Athanasius argues that he

⁹ Ath. *Cont. Arianos*, Orat. ii. 42, 43. Πῶς οὐ παντελῶς κενὸν καὶ ἀλυσιτελὲς τὸ παρ' αὐτοῖς διδόμενον ἔστι, προσποίησιν μὲν ἔχον, τῇ δὲ ἀληθείᾳ μηδὲν ἔχον πρὸς εὐσέβειαν

βοήθημα;—'Αλυσιτελὲς ἔχουσι καὶ παρ' αὐτῶν διδόμενον ὕδωρ λειπόμενον εὐσεβείᾳ, ὥστε καὶ τὸν ῥαντιζόμενον παρ' αὐτῶν ῥυπαίνεσθαι μᾶλλον ἐν ἀσεβείᾳ, ἢ λυτροῦσθαι.

only meant that heretical baptism was unprofitable so long as the person remained in heresy; but the whole tenor of the passage, and, as Dr. Pusey points out, of Eastern custom, is against such an interpretation.¹ Athanasius clearly meant that the baptisms were entirely void.

St. Epiphanius, unlike St. Athanasius, was against rejecting Arian baptism, but only pending the decision of a general council, whose judgment he anticipated would be ‘the separation of such a blasphemous heresy.’² Therefore, the difference was not on the principle. He merely held that private individuals had no right to decide upon a case of heresy.

Whatever variety there may have been, then, in the application of the rule, the rule itself was distinct in the East, that baptism administered by those in formal heresy was no real baptism at all.

With regard to lay baptism within the Church, there is very little evidence indeed in the East in the fourth century, and that little is of an indirect character.

St. Basil’s opinion, as it appears incidentally in his canonical epistle, has already been mentioned. St. Chrysostom says that baptism is ‘accomplished only by the holy hands of priests;’ and he asks, ‘How will anyone be able without them to escape the fire of hell, or to obtain the crowns which are in store? For it is verily these who have been entrusted with the pains of the spiritual birth, and have had committed to them that nativity of ours which is by baptism.’³ He is

¹ Pusey, Note on Tertullian, *Lib. Expos. Fid. Ecc.* xiii.
of *Fathers*, p. 286.

³ Chrys. *De Sac.* III. v. 187, 188.

² Epiph. *Adv. Hæres.* III. ii.,

speaking of its ordinary ministration, but no indication occurs of any exception in cases of necessity.

St. Epiphanius counts the permission given to women to baptize as an error of the Marcionites, Quintillians and Collyridians; ⁴ but as these heretics employed women as priests, his remarks may be supposed to apply to a recognised female ministry rather than to urgent baptism by a woman within the Church. Still he does not qualify his animadversion by any exception, which he probably would have done if women were ever allowed to baptize.

Some words are quoted from Gregory of Nazianzus, in which he says that every person is qualified to baptize, if he is not under censure. But the context shows that he is only speaking of the clergy. ‘Do not say,’ he writes, ‘Let a bishop baptize me, or a metropolitan . . . or if a priest, at least a celibate. . . . Do not seek the excellence of the minister or baptizer. For everyone is excellent to thee for cleansing; only let him be one who is approved, and is not clearly under censure, nor of another Church.’ He then compares baptism with the impress of a seal bearing the imperial stamp. The seal itself may be of brass or it may be of iron, but both will stamp equally well. This simile seems to require that he who stamps shall bear the imperial commission of holy orders, or the impress may not be true.⁵

An apparent exception to the general tendency of the Eastern evidence against lay baptism is afforded by

⁴ Epiph. *Adv. Hæres.* i. xlii. [xxii.] 4; ii. xlix. [xxix.] 2; iii. lxxix. [lix.] 1.

⁵ Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xl; *In sanctum baptisma.* Σοὶ δὲ πᾶς ἀγίοπιστος εἰς τὴν καθάρσιν· μόνον ἔστω τις τῶν

ἐγκρίτων, καὶ μὴ τῶν προδήλως κατεγνωσμένων, μηδὲ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἀλλότριος. See Kelsall and Waterland, *Waterland's Works*, vol. vi. pp. 121, 188.

the oft quoted story of the young Athanasius. It is said that he went through the form of baptizing some other boys, while they were amusing themselves on the seashore at Alexandria by mimicking the ceremonies which they had witnessed in church. The Bishop Alexander was watching them in the distance, and is supposed to have taken serious counsel with his clergy as to how these playful baptisms were to be regarded. Finding that all had been done in due order according to the rites of the Church, he is said to have decided that they were valid. Perhaps no circumstance has done more to impress the popular mind with the belief that the laity can baptize than this tale of the youthful champion of the faith,

With a child's deep earnestness,
Showing his mates how saints baptize and bless.⁶

But it is difficult to think of it as other than a picturesque legend. It is related first by Rufinus, and from him it is repeated by Sozomen. Socrates, however, who tells of the mimic games of the children, omits any mention of baptisms in particular, or of the important decision to which they are supposed to have led.⁷ It may, therefore, be concluded that he did not believe this part of the narrative. Rufinus was an inaccurate and credulous historian, and even he only says that Alexander was reputed to have decided (*statuisse traditur*) that the baptisms were good. Indeed, the apocryphal character of the story is put almost beyond question when it is attempted to make a sufficiently tender age of Athanasius synchronise at all with the episcopate of Alexander. He must have been about

⁶ Keble, *Lyra Innocentium*,
'Children's Sports.'

⁷ Ruf. I. xiv. ; Soz. II. xvii. ; Soc.
I. xv.

seventeen years old when Alexander was made bishop. No doubt the story was current when Rufinus wrote; but this was nearly a century later, when the fame of Athanasius might easily have given rise to embellishments of the simple record of the play at ecclesiastical functions, so natural among children brought up amidst the ceremonial of the Church. That Rufinus could credit it, and that it could be credited by those who read his history, may be evidence that lay baptism was not regarded as unquestionably invalid at the time when he wrote at the close of the fourth century. But this was in the West, and therefore argues nothing for its acceptance in the East.⁸

Bingham maintained that lay baptism was admitted by the council of Nicæa, because the council accepted the orders of the Novatian clergy. This seems to have little enough to do with it, and it was only by a strained argument that Bingham made it serve his cause. He insisted that Novatian ministrations were lay for a double reason. First, he held that Novatian had never been a bishop because his consecration was uncanonical; consequently those whom he ordained were really no more than laymen. Secondly, if their orders had been otherwise valid, he urged that heresy had deleted them, and had reduced the clergy back to the position of laity.

⁸ The story is of course rejected by Brett, *Judgment of Church of England*, pp. 19-30; Hickee, Letter to author of *Lay Baptism Invalid*, prefixed to 2nd ed., p. xxx.; Laurence, *Second Part of Lay Baptism Invalid*, pp. 62-97; for they were opposed to lay baptism, and were therefore interested in discrediting it. It is, however, also rejected by scholars

such as Cave, *Lives of the Primitive Fathers*, vol. ii. p. 72; Du Pin, *Nouv. Bibliothèque*, Art. 'Athanasius'; Hook, *Life of Athanasius*; Bright, *Dict. Christ. Biog.* vol. i. p. 179. Bingham, being on the side of lay baptism, accepted it, *Works*, vol. viii. pp. 34-37. So did Dean Stanley, *Lectures on the Eastern Church*, 1884, p. 214.

Hence, by accepting Novatians without any decree for their rebaptism, the council, according to Bingham, was committed to the principle of the validity of lay baptism. Neither of his pleas for the emptiness of Novatian orders will, however, hold good; and the terms of the canon itself are conclusive against his interpretation of it, for it says the clergy who come over to the Church are to retain their orders.⁹ They could not retain what they never had. The obvious meaning is that their orders were valid. The whole way in which the canon is forced into the evidence is so unsound that it would be unnecessary to allude to it at all, if it had not been discussed at great length in the controversy between Bingham and his opponents.¹

In the West, in the fourth century, the tendency was the reverse of that in the East. Both heretical and lay baptism met with general support, although guarded by some limitations.

An epistle attributed to Eusebius, who was Pope for a few months in the year 310, contains the statement that the Roman Church then reconciled those baptized by heretics who believed in the Trinity, by imposition of hands.² The letter, however, is said to be spurious, and

⁹ Περὶ τῶν ὀνομαζόντων μὲν ἑαυτοὺς Καθαροῦς ποτε, προσερχομένων δὲ τῇ καθολικῇ καὶ ἀποστολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἔδοξε τῇ ἀγίᾳ καὶ μεγάλῃ συνόδῳ, ὥστε χειροτονουμένους αὐτοὺς μένειν οὕτως ἐν τῷ κλήρῳ.—*Conc. Nic. can. 8.*

¹ Bingham, *Second Part of Schol. Hist. of Lay Baptism* and *Dissertation on the 8th canon of the Council of Nice, Works*, vol.

viii. Brett, *Inquiry into the Practice of the Primitive Church*, and *Further Inquiry*, &c. Brett completely refuted Bingham's favourite theory that heresy deleted orders, upon which he built much of his defence of lay baptism.

² Similiter et hæreticos omnes, quicumque Dei gratia convertuntur, et in sanctæ Trinitatis nomine credentes baptizati sunt, Romanæ

therefore its evidence is of no great value, though the fact is probably true, for it accords in a modified form with the rule under Stephen half a century before.

We are on surer ground when we come to the council of Arles, in 314. The subject was discussed there, and the Roman view prevailed, as was natural, since the East was unrepresented, although Africa sent some bishops. The decree ran thus: 'It is resolved concerning the Africans [or Arians], who have been used to rebaptize according to a law of their own, that, if any one shall come from this heresy to the Church, the priests shall interrogate him as to the symbol of our faith. And if they shall find him to have been baptized into the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, they shall only lay hands on him that he may receive the Holy Ghost. But if, being interrogated, he does not respond as to this Trinity, let him be baptized.'³ This seems to imply not only a correct form of words, but also a correct faith in the Trinity. There is, therefore, still to be traced in it the remains of the early doctrine that fundamental heresy might invalidate a baptism accurate in its externals. There is great divergence in the accounts of the number of bishops who attended the council. St. Augustine, in a passage, of which, however, the text is disputed, says there were two hundred.⁴

ecclesiæ regulam tenentes per manus impositionem reconciliari præcipimus.—Euseb. *Decret.* Ep. iii.

³ De Afris [or, Arianis], quod propria lege sua utuntur ut rebaptizent, si ad ecclesiam aliquis de hac hæresi venerit, interrogent eum symbolum; et si perviderint eum in Patre, et Filio, et Spiritu sancto, esse baptizatum, manus ei tantum

imponatur ut accipiat Spiritum sanctum. Quod si interrogatus, non responderit hanc Trinitatem, baptizetur.—Conc. Arelat. I. can. 8. The reading 'Arianis' accords best with the words 'hac hæresi,' and 'Afris' with the historical circumstances. The latter is generally taken as the true reading.

⁴ Aug. *Adv. Parm.* I. v. 10.

The signatures of only thirty-three are recorded. As an indication of the usage of the time, it is of much moment whether the bishops were few or many. But the canon has an importance independent of the numbers of those who passed it, because it was afterwards generally accepted in the West as laying down the law.

The African bishops at Arles no doubt yielded to the majority, if they had so long inherited the strictness of their predecessors. Within a hundred years of the time when Cyprian ruled at Carthage, the African rule gave way in the very home where the earlier decrees had been carried. A council held at Carthage, under Gratus, in 348, decided against rebaptizing persons who had been baptized with water in the true faith.⁵ No special mention is made of heresy, but there can be little doubt that the intention of the instruction was to bring the Carthaginian usage into conformity with that prescribed at Arles.

The current of Western opinion continued to run more and more in this direction. Arians and Novatians, baptized by their own heretical priests, were freely admitted to catholic communion by penance and confirmation alone. Pope Siricius, at the end of the fourth century, declares that this was the custom then of the East, as well as of the West, with a disposition probably already to generalise Western custom into that of the

⁵ Ergo, si vobis placet, consideremus primum titulum rebaptizationis. Unde sanctitatem vestram postulo, ut mentis vestræ placita producatís ad descendentem in aquam, et interrogatum in Trinitate secundum evangelii fidem et apostolorum doctrinam et confessum bonam conscientiam in

Deum de resurrectione Jesu Christi si liceat iterum interrogari in eadem fide et in aqua iterum intingi. Universi episcopi dixerunt: Absit, absit. Illicitas esse sancimus rebaptizationes et satis esse alienum a sincera fide et catholica disciplina.—Conc. Carthag. I. art. i.

entire Church, beyond what strict investigation would have endorsed.⁶

Nevertheless some must have felt that the question was not finally closed. St. Ambrose seems to have been disposed to reject heretical baptism altogether. ‘The baptism of the faithless,’ he says, ‘does not heal, does not cleanse, but defiles.’⁷ An attempt to explain this of Jewish baptism, and not of heretical, is a Roman effort which cannot be maintained.⁸ But Milan was an independent Church, and Ambrose an independent bishop, so that his views may not have coincided with those of the majority of his time.

Yet Optatus, who was Bishop of Milevum in Numidia, writing about the year 370, took the stricter side, entirely rejecting the baptism both of Jews and heretics, as polluting instead of purifying. Milevum had sent a bishop to the council of Carthage under St. Cyprian, and Optatus, in so expressing himself, was but upholding the tradition handed down to him in his see.⁹

⁶ Prima itaque paginæ tuæ fronte signasti, baptizatos ab impiis Arianis plurimos ad fidem catholicam festinare, et quosdam de fratribus nostris eosdem denuo baptizare velle: quod non licet, cum hoc fieri et apostolus vetat, et canonicæ contradicant, et post cessatum Ariminense concilium, missa ad provincias a venerandæ memoriæ prædecessore meo Liberio generalia decreta prohibeant, quos nos cum Novatianis aliisque hæreticis, sicut est in synodo constitutum, per invocationem solam septiformis Spiritus, episcopalis manus impositione, catholicorum conventui sociamus, quod etiam totus oriens occidentensque custodit: a quo tramite

vos quoque posthac minime convenit deviare, si non vultis a nostro collegio synodali sententia separari.—Siric. *Ad Himerium Tarraconensem*, Ep. i. 2. Ut venientes a Novatianis vel Montensibus, per manus impositionem suscipiantur, præter eos quos rebaptizant.—*Id. Ad Episcopos Africae*, Ep. v. 2.

⁷ Non sanat baptismus perfidorum, non mundat, sed polluit.—Amb. *De Mysteriis*, iv. 23.

⁸ See Pusey’s Note on Tertulian, *Lib. of Fathers*, p. 285.

⁹ Christi enim vox est: Qui semel lotus est, non habet necessitatem iterum lavandi, quia est mundus totus: et de eo lavacro pronuntiavit, quod de Trinitate

St. Pacian, Bishop of Barcelona in the latter half of the fourth century, is another who rejected heretical baptism, quoting the African decisions with approval.¹

Lay baptism, as well as heretical, began to find a footing in the West in the fourth century, though to a limited extent.

Early in the fourth century, the council of Elvira decreed that ‘when persons are on a voyage abroad, or when no Church is at hand, one of the faithful, who has his own baptism entire, and is not a bigamist, can baptize a catechumen placed in the extremity of sickness, so only that if he survives he bring him to the bishop that he may be perfected by the laying on of hands.’² The council was only a local one, attended by nineteen bishops.

Quite late in the fourth century, in the year 398, a *celebrandum esse mandaverat; non de Judæorum aut hæreticorum, qui, dum lavant, sordidant; sed de aqua sancta, quæ de trium nominum fontibus inundat. Sic enim ipse Dominus præcipit dicendo: Ite, baptizate omnes gentes, in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti. De hoc lavacro dixit: Qui semel lotus est, non habet necessitatem iterum lavandi.—Opt. De Schismate Donatist. v. iii.*

Polianus a Mileo dixit: Justum est hæreticum baptizari in ecclesia sancta.—Conc. Carth. VII.

¹ Pacian, *Ad Sympron.* Ep. i. 7.

² Placuit [or, Loco] peregre navigantes, aut si ecclesia in proximo non fuerit, posse fidelem, qui lavacrum suum integrum habet, nec sit bigamus, baptizare in necessitate

infirmittatis positum catechumenum, ita ut si supervixerit ad episcopum eum perducatur, ut per manus impositionem perfici possit.—Conc. Elib. can. 38. On its date, see *ante*, p. 76. It is uncertain what is meant by the term ‘integrum.’ Bingham, following Vossius, understood it to refer to one who has not received cleric baptism, which in those days incapacitated a man for holy orders. Albanus, followed by Mansi and Maskell, thought it meant one who had not lapsed, and Mansi refers to St. Cyprian and St. Pacian as both calling unapsed priests ‘integros.’ See Bingham, *Works*, vol. viii. p. 33; Maskell, *Holy Baptism*, p. 194. At least it implies a condition of full communion.

council at Carthage passed a decree forbidding women to baptize.³ Since it expresses no similar prohibition to laymen, it might be argued that men were allowed to baptize. But the women, whose irregular baptisms had no doubt called forth the canon, were probably those who acted as midwives, to whom occasions of necessity would happen more commonly than to men. Therefore there was no corresponding need to forbid men. So far as it goes, the decision is against lay baptism; but it may be observed that it says nothing about rebaptizing any whom women might have wrongly baptized. Therefore it is perhaps simply a canon of discipline to restrain women as a matter of order.

The only conciliar utterance definitely on the side of lay baptism during the first four centuries is, however, the solitary one of the little Spanish council of Elvira, and that restricted it to lay churchmen, under particular limitations, in special circumstances.

Ecclesiastical writers do not add much to the information.

We have the testimony of the pseudo-Ambrose, presumably Hilary the Deacon, that the laity were not allowed to baptize.⁴ St. Pacian also says that the office of baptizing was reserved to the ministry, in very restrictive terms, seeming to exclude laymen absolutely.⁵

³ Mulier baptizare non præsumat.—Conc. Carthag. IV. can. 100. Gratian adds as a gloss the words 'nisi necessitate cogente,' in order to bring the canon into harmony with later usage: *Decret.* III., *De Consecr.* iv. 20. Peter Lombard quotes them as if they were part of the original decree: *Sent.* iv. vi. They will be found so quoted in some

other books. The addition is entirely spurious, and was clearly indicated as only a comment by Gratian.

⁴ Pseud. Amb. *Comm. in Ephes.* iv. See *ante*, p. 38.

⁵ Quoting Matt. xviii. 18, the charge to bind and loose, he says: An tantum hoc solis apostolis licet? Ergo et baptizare solis licet, et

A passage in St. Optatus, at about the same period, seems at first sight to allow all baptism administered in due form. He says there are three things necessary to the sacrament. First, there is the Blessed Trinity, without whom baptism is impossible, and he apparently means by this that it must be administered in the Name of the Trinity. Secondly, there is the faith of the recipient, and this also is indispensable. Thirdly, there is the person of the administrator, but his qualification is not of equal necessity with the other two requisites. Therefore he concluded that whatever is done in the Name of the Blessed Trinity, with a right faith, is valid and sufficient.⁶ This sounds tolerably clear; but Optatus might well ask that the context should be read before applying the argument unhesi-

Spiritum sanctum dare solis, et solis gentium peccata purgare: quia totum hoc non aliis quam apostolicis imperatum est.—Pac. *Ad Sympron. Novatianum*, Ep. i. 6. Generat Christus in ecclesia per suos sacerdotes. . . . Hæc autem compleri alias nequeunt, nisi lavacri et chrismatismis et antistitis sacramento. Lavacro enim peccata purgantur; chrismate sanctus Spiritus superfunditur; utraque vero ista, manu et ore antistitis impetramus.—Pac. *De Bapt.* vii.

⁶ In hoc sacramento baptismatis celebrando, tres esse species constat, quas et vos nec angere, nec minuere, nec prætermittere poteritis. Prima species est in Trinitate; secunda, in credente; tertia, in operante. Sed non pari libramine ponderandæ sunt singulæ: duas enim video necessarias, et unam quasi necessariam: principalem locum Trinitas

possidet, sine qua res ipsa non potest geri: hanc sequitur fides credentis: jam persona operantis vicina est, quæ simili auctoritate esse non potest. Duæ priores permanent semper immutabiles et immotæ: Trinitas enim semper ipsa est: fides in singulis una est: vim suam semper retinent ambæ. Persona vero operantis, intelligitur duabus prioribus speciebus par esse non posse, eo quod sola esse videatur mutabilis. Inter nos et vos vultis ejusdem personæ esse distantiam; et sanctiores vos æstimantes, superbiam vestram non dubitatis antepone-re Trinitati: cum persona operantis mutari possit, Trinitas mutari non possit: et cum ab accipientibus baptismum desiderari debeat, vos desiderandos esse proponitis.—Optatus, *De Schismate Donat.* v. iv.

tatingly to lay baptism. There it appears that he is contesting the Donatist objection to the validity of ministrations by unholy priests. His point is that the unworthiness of the minister does not render his acts void. He probably had not the idea of lay ministration at all before his mind; and, since he took a strict view against heretical baptism, it is quite likely that he would not have been lax in his opinions about that by laymen. At the same time it may be allowed that Laurence's efforts to entirely explain away the bearing of the passage on the question of lay baptism are not altogether successful.⁷ The principle laid down by Optatus might go far towards supporting its sanction as valid.

St. Jerome's testimony is more distinct. He wrote a treatise against the Luciferians, episcopal schismatics of the latter half of the fourth century, who allowed the validity of Arian baptism, although they rejected the Arians themselves entirely from membership in the Church. The principle involved in this went beyond anything hitherto recognised, unless perhaps by Pope Stephen. St. Jerome maintained that it was not logical: baptism and holy orders must stand or fall together.⁸ It might be supposed from this that he held ordination to be a necessary qualification for the ministry of baptism, if it were not that he incidentally remarks that laymen are frequently allowed to baptize in cases of

⁷ Laurence, *Second Part of Lay Baptism Invalid*, pp. 103-9.

⁸ Quamobrem oro te, ut aut sacrificandi ei licentiam tribuas, cujus baptisma probas, aut reprobas ejus baptisma, quem non existimas sacerdotem. —Jer. *Adv.*

Lucif. 6. Proba mihi ab Arianis venientem laicum habere baptismum, et tunc ei pœnitentiam non negabo. Si Christianus non est, si non habuerit sacerdotem qui eum faceret Christianum, quomodo aget pœnitentiam homo, qui necdum

necessity.⁹ The admission does not square well with the general line of his argument; and the old reasoning of Tertullian, that what a man has received he can also give, is weak enough. The passage is not, therefore, valuable for its logical defence of lay baptism; but it is historical evidence that there was some degree of its practice and acceptance in St. Jerome's day. There was a limit to the extent to which he allowed its validity. He denied that one who was not a Christian could make a Christian of others.¹ This followed naturally from the ground he took. A pagan, not having received baptism, had it not to give away.

As the fourth century merged into the fifth, St. Augustine threw the weight of his judgment into the scale of accepting the validity of both heretical and lay baptism. Probably no man since the days of the apostles has so influenced theology as the great doctor of the West has influenced it in Western Christendom. When he became a champion of the more liberal view of irregular baptism, its future hold upon the West was decided.

Not only the custom under which he lived, but the circumstances of his day, disposed Augustine towards the Roman use. He was engaged in controversy with the Donatists, and the Donatists, regarding themselves as the only true Church, rebaptized converts from the catholic communion. Augustine's temperament led him

credit?—*Ibid.* 13. There are several passages to the same effect. Hilary, a successor of Lucifer's, did reject Arian baptism as well as Arian orders.—*Ibid.* 21.

⁹ Quod frequenter, si tamen

necessitas cogit, scimus etiam licere laicis. Ut enim accipit quis, ita et dare potest.—*Ibid.* 9.

¹ Novam rem asseris, ut Christianus quisquam factus sit ab eo, qui non fuit Christianus.—*Ibid.* 12.

naturally to oppose his adversaries with a vehemence of counter opinion which now and then ran perilously near to excess. It fitted in then with his character to launch as an argument against Donatist rebaptism, that the catholic Church was not wont to rebaptize converts from heresy. Even, therefore, if the Donatists' conception of their own churchmanship was correct, their practice of rebaptizing was counter to the usage of Christendom.

St. Augustine, however, admitted that the subject had been one of acknowledged difficulty, causing much variety of opinion.² The Donatists claimed the authority of St. Cyprian in support of their rebaptisms. The precedent applied on the supposition that they formed the true Church, and that the catholics were heretics. St. Augustine does not deny this, but replies that Cyprian was mistaken. He expresses the most glowing and unaffected admiration for 'the peaceful and glorious martyr,' 'whom our pious mother Church counts among the few rare men of surpassing excellence and grace,' and seems never to weary of paying ardent homage to his signal virtues.³ He further allows that he would himself have been a convert to Cyprian's views, as expressed in his letter to Jubaianus, if it had stood alone in the evidence. But he conceived that an enormous weight of authority lay on the other side, though the greater part of it is entirely lost to us, if it ever really existed.⁴ He even asserts that a general council

² Aug. *De Bapt.* I. vii. 9; IV. v. 7; &c.

³ *Ibid.* VI. ii. 3, and continually throughout the treatise.

⁴ Profecto issem in eadem sententiam, nisi me ad diligentem

considerationem revocaret tanta auctoritas aliorum, quos vel pares gratia doctrine, vel etiam fortasse doctiores, per tot gentes Latinas, Græcas, Barbaras, et ipsam Hebræam, ecclesia toto orbe diffusa

had decided the matter. It is remarkable that, though Augustine refers a great number of times to this council, he nowhere mentions its name, or its date, or anything whereby it can absolutely be identified.⁵ Certainly there is no decree of a general council corresponding with his statement. It is generally agreed that he must allude to the council of Arles, and that he attributed to it an œcumenical force which it did not possess. His argument from authority is, therefore, less formidable than he supposed, and it may be assumed that he would have held more modified views if he had not fallen into this mistake.

Augustine did not, however, rely solely on the decree of this council. Having been led by its sentence to examine the question for himself, he argues it out on its own merits, in his treatises against the Donatists, with accustomed prolixity, but with characteristic vigour of reasoning.

He declares that baptism can only rightly be received in the Church, and therefore is not rightly received in schism. Nevertheless it is received, for 'it cannot be said that that is not given which is given.'⁶ Contrary to the theory which Bingham fastened upon the fathers, Augustine distinctly held that orders were

parere potuit, quæ ipsum quoque pepererat, qui mihi nullo modo videri potuerunt frustra noluisse istam tenere sententiam.—*De Bapt.* III. iv. 6.

⁵ *Ibid.* I. vii. 9, xviii. 28; II. vii. 12, ix. 14; III. x. 14; IV. v. 7, vi. 8; v. iv. 4; VI. ii. 3, vii. 10, viii. 12, xiii. 21; VII. i. 1, xxvii. 53.

⁶ Si dicis, Non recte foris datur; respondemus, Sicut non recte foris

habetur, et tamen habetur; sic non recte foris datur, sed tamen datur. . . . Non tamen dici fas est, non datum esse quod datum est.—*Ibid.* I. i. 2. Duo sunt etiam quæ dicimus, et esse in catholica ecclesia baptismum, et illic tantum recte accipi. . . . Item alia duo dicimus, esse apud Donatistas baptismum, non autem illic recte accipi.—*Ibid.* I. iii. 4.

not annulled by heresy or schism ; and, therefore, that heretical baptism was valid. ‘As the baptized person,’ he says, ‘if he depart from the unity of the Church, does not thereby lose the sacrament of baptism, so also he who is ordained, if he depart from the unity of the Church, does not lose the sacrament of conferring baptism. For neither sacrament may be wronged. If a sacrament necessarily becomes void in the case of the wicked, both must be void ; if it remain valid with the wicked, this must be so with both. If, therefore, the baptism be acknowledged which he could not lose who severed himself from the unity of the Church, that baptism must also be acknowledged which was administered by one who had not by his secession lost the sacrament of conferring baptism. For, as those who return to the Church, if they had been baptized before their secession, are not rebaptized, so those who return, having been ordained before their secession, are certainly not reordained ; but either they again exercise their former ministry, if the interests of the Church require it, or, if they do not exercise it, they at any rate retain the sacrament of their ordination ; and hence it is, that when hands are laid on them to mark their reconciliation, they are not ranked with the laity.’⁷

Here St. Augustine very emphatically rests the claims of schismatical baptism upon the valid orders of the administrator. And so he constantly reverts to a parallel between priests who have sinned in faith and those who have sinned in morals, as though the cases were strictly alike. He argues that baptism by a priest who is apparently without the Church, through schism, is as good as baptism by one who is apparently

⁷ Aug. *De Bapt.* i. i. 2.

within it, but really without its proper communion through the moral wickedness of his life. ‘The heretic and the catholic may have the one baptism, and yet not have the one Church, as in the catholic Church the innocent man and the murderer may have the one baptism, though they have not the one Spirit.’⁸ The reason for this is that the sacrament is not theirs but Christ’s. ‘We recognise in heretics,’ he says, ‘that baptism which belongs not to heretics but to Christ, in such sort as in fornicators, in unclean persons or effeminate, in idolaters, in poisoners, in those who are fond of contention, in the envious, in drunkards, in revellers; and in men like these we hold valid the baptism which is not theirs but Christ’s.’⁹

This truth that Christ is the real baptizer is the unfailing argument which he retorts on his opponents. Petilian, like the other Donatists, and like St. Cyprian in a measure before, urged that it would be an anomaly if an uncleaned person were able to cleanse another. Augustine replied that on this theory the innocence produced in the baptized ought to be in proportion to the innocence of the baptizer, which is absurd. ‘When a man preaches the word of God, or administers the sacraments of God, he does not, if he is a bad man, preach or minister out of his own treasure.’¹ ‘Baptism can exist in an unrighteous man; and be administered by an unrighteous man, and that no unrighteous baptism, but such as is just and true, not because it belongs to the unrighteous man, but because it is

⁸ *De Bapt.* v. xxi. 29; comp. vi. ii., viii., xiv., xxiv., &c.

⁹ Sic approbamus in hæreticis baptismum, non hæreticorum, sed Christi.—Aug. *Adv. Petil.* II. cviii.

247. Comp. II. xxv. 82; III. xxxviii. 44, &c.; *De Bapt.* IV. iv. 5, xx. 27; VI., VII., *passim*, on Conc. Carthag. VII.; &c.

¹ *Adv. Petil.* II. vi. 13.

of God.’² ‘The baptism of Christ is to be recognised and approved, not by the standard of their merits by whom it is administered, but by His alone, of whom it is said, “The same is he which baptizeth.”’³

If St. Augustine had accepted St. Cyprian’s premises, he would also have accepted his conclusions. The difference between them was mainly this: that Cyprian regarded heresy as severing completely from the Church, while Augustine regarded it as a sin which did not make the breach complete. Thus, while Cyprian was bound to disallow the acts of renegade priests as done outside the fold, Augustine could still see in them the exercise of Christ’s ministry. It was not, then, their schism or heresy which generated sons of God, but the Church, that is, Christ Himself, who generated children by the instrumentality of their sinful hands. ‘For,’ he says, ‘neither is it their separation which generates, but what they have kept of the Church; because if they also abandoned this altogether, they could not generate.’⁴ And so St. Augustine writes to Vincentius: ‘When you pass over to us, certainly you first leave what you were, so as not to pass over to us as heretics. You will say, “Then baptize me.” I would, if thou wert not baptized, or if thou wert baptized with the baptism of Donatus or of Rogatus, and not of Christ. . . . For from the catholic Church are all the sacraments of the Lord, which so you

² *Adv. Petil.* II. xxxiii. 78.

³ *De Bapt.* III. iv. 6.

⁴ Neque enim separatio earum generat, sed quod secum de ista tenuerunt; quod si et hanc dimittant, omnino non generant. Hæc itaque in omnibus generat, cujus sacra-

menta retinentur, unde possit tale aliquid ubicumque generari: quamvis non omnes quos generat ad ejus pertineant unitatem, quæ usque in finem perseverantes salvabit.—*Ibid.* I. x. 14. Comp. xii. 19, xv. 23, &c.

hold and give as they were held and given even before you went forth. And you do not on that account hold them not, because you are not there, whence are what you hold.' ⁵

All this has to do with baptism by priests, and has no reference whatever to baptism by laymen. It is simply a question of whether a priest can be disqualified from validly exercising his commission to baptize by errors in his faith. St. Cyprian said, Yes. St. Augustine said, No. St. Augustine insisted that intellectual sins must be regarded in the same light as moral sins, and that neither deprived a man of the power to be an instrument of Christ's sacramental ministry. The mind of the Western Church has undoubtedly endorsed St. Augustine's view rather than St. Cyprian's; though it has never commended itself equally to the East. Certainly it seems a safer doctrine, that the sacraments are 'effectual because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men,' ⁶ than that they are in any way dependent on the accurate faith or virtue of the agent. The external commission of holy orders can always be secured; the internal qualification of the priest never. If sacraments depended on the

⁵ Cum autem transitis ad nos, prius utique relinquitis quod eratis, ne ad nos hæretici transeat. Baptiza ergo me, inquis. Facerem, si baptizatus non esses, aut si Donati vel Rogati, non Christi baptismo baptizatus esses. Non sacramenta Christiana faciunt te hæreticum, sed prava dissensio. Non propter malum quod processit ex te, negandum est bonum quod remansit in te, quod malo tuo habes, si non ibi habes unde est bonum quod

habes. Ex catholica enim ecclesia sunt omnia dominica sacramenta, quæ sic habetis et datis, quemadmodum habebantur et dabantur, etiam priusquam inde exiretis. Non tamen ideo non habetis, quia ibi non estis, unde sunt quæ habetis. . . . Nobiscum autem estis in baptismo, in symbolo, in cæteris dominicis sacramentis.—Aug. *Ad Vincent. Ep. xciii. xi. 46.*

⁶ *Thirty-nine Articles, xxvi.*

latter, nearly all sacraments would be doubtful. ‘A dispenser of the word and sacrament of the gospel,’ says St. Augustine, ‘if he is a good man, becomes a fellow partner in the working of the gospel; but, if he is a bad man, he does not therefore cease to be a dispenser of the gospel.’⁷ And again, ‘Baptism itself, even in him who is nothing, is not nothing. Baptism indeed is something, aye, something great, for His sake of whom it is said, “This is he which baptizeth.”’⁸

To apply these passages in St. Augustine’s name, as is sometimes done,⁹ to baptism by laymen and modern dissenters is a gross perversion of his own argument. He discusses baptism by an unordained person separately and distinctly, and therefore it is the more inexcusable to suppose that he confused the cases together in his own mind. His whole reasoning against the Donatists rests on the basis that a priest can never, as we should now say, lose the ‘character’ of a priest; but must, even in schism or heresy, still be an ambassador of Christ. Take away his orders, and the whole argument crumbles to the ground.

Augustine, while he insisted that a heretical priest could administer real baptism, was very far from admitting that it was the same thing to the recipient as baptism within the catholic communion. He drew a sharp distinction between the *validity* and the *efficacy* of the sacrament. St. Cyprian and the bishops at Carthage fell into error, he says, ‘from their not distinguishing the sacrament from the effect or benefit of the sacrament; and, because its effect and benefit was not found among heretics, in freeing them from their sins and setting

⁷ *Adv. Petil.* III. lv. 67.

⁸ *Aug. In Joan.* Tract. vi. 14.

⁹ E.g. Blunt, *Dict. of Doct. and Hist. Theology*, pp. 405, 406.

their hearts right, the sacrament itself was also thought to be wanting among them.’¹ He, on the other hand, believed that they ‘acquired nothing; but this as regards salvation, not as regards the sacrament.’² The sacrament was really conferred, but its grace was in abeyance as long as the person remained in heresy. It could be received apart from the Church’s communion, but not with any profit.³ To make it profitable there must be reconciliation with the Church. ‘It will only then avail for the remission of sins, when the recipient, being reconciled to the unity of the Church, is purged from the sacrilege of deceit, by which his sins were retained and their remission prevented.’⁴

To Augustine’s mind the obstacle, therefore, was not in connection with the heretical priest, so much as in connection with the heretical subject of the sacrament. Just as the effect of baptism is generally considered to be in abeyance when impenitence is a bar to its operation, so, in his view, it was also in abeyance when the faith was in fault, because the person was in a position outside the unity of the Church. But the sacrament, being conferred by a real priest, although an evil one, was a real sacrament. He puts it eloquently in his Lectures on St. John. ‘Thou art anxious, it may be, and sayest, I was baptized without; I fear, therefore, lest I am guilty, because I was baptized without.

¹ *De Bapt.* vi. i. 1.

² Nihil quidem foris consecuti sunt, sed ad salutem, non ad sacramentum. Salus enim propria est bonis; sacramenta vero communia et bonis et malis.—*Ibid.* vii. xxxiii. 65.

³ Sicut autem per unitatis reconciliationem incipit utiliter haberi,

quod extra unitatem inutiliter habebatur: sic per eandem reconciliationem incipit utile esse, quod extra eam inutiliter datum est.—*Ibid.* i. i. 2.

⁴ *Ibid.* i. xii. 18. Similar passages occur repeatedly throughout his Treatises against the Donatists.

Already thou beginnest to know what thou hast to bewail. Thou sayest truly that thou art guilty, not because of thy receiving, but because of thy receiving without. Keep, then, what thou hast received; amend thy receiving it without. Thou hast received what is the dove's apart from the dove. Here are two things said to thee: Thou hast received, and, Apart from the dove thou hast received. In that thou hast received, I approve; that thou hast received without, I disapprove. Keep then what thou hast received; it is not changed but recognised: it is the mark of my King, I will not profane it. I will correct the deserter, not change the mark. Boast not of thy baptism because I call it a real baptism. Behold, I say that it is so; the whole catholic Church says that it is so; the dove regards it, and acknowledges it, and groans because thou hast it without; she sees therein what she may acknowledge, sees also what she may correct. It is a real baptism; come.'⁵ This shows how far the great saint would have been from endorsing schismatical baptism, with no true priest even to administer it, as carrying with it the effects of Church baptism to a person who is separated from the Church's unity.

One exception St. Augustine allowed to the unfruitfulness of baptism by a heretical priest. Speaking of a dying person, he says: 'If, indeed, extreme necessity compelled him, where he could not find a catholic from whom he might receive, and, having kept catholic peace in his mind, he received from someone who was without the catholic unity that which he was about to receive in the catholic unity itself—if he immediately departed this life, we should deem him no other than a catholic.

⁵ *In Joan.* Tract. vi. 16, 17.

And if he should be delivered from bodily death, when he has restored himself in bodily presence to the catholic congregation from which he had never departed in heart, not only we should not reprove what he did, but we should even praise it most confidently and truthfully, because he believed God to be present to his heart, where he was keeping unity, and because he was unwilling to depart from this life without the sacrament of holy baptism, which, wherever he might find it, he knew to be not of men but of God.’⁶

Of the validity and efficacy of lay baptism by a baptized person, in circumstances of urgency, St. Augustine’s own mind was not doubtful, though he speaks with a shadow of uncertainty, as though it were still an unsettled point. ‘If,’ he says, ‘some layman, compelled by necessity, has given it to a dying person, because, when he himself received it, he had learnt how it was to be given, I do not know whether anyone could piously say that it should be repeated. But, if he does it, driven by no necessity, it is an usurpation of another’s gift; yet, if necessity urges, it is either no fault or a venial one. However, although it should be usurped by no necessity, and is given by anyone whomsoever to anyone whomsoever, what has been given cannot be said not to be given, although it may rightly be said to be given unlawfully.’⁷ The phrase, ‘What

⁶ *De Bapt.* I. ii. 3. Sine sancti baptismi sacramento, quod ubicumque invenit, non hominum, sed Dei esse cognovit, noluit ex hac vita migrare. *Comp.* VII. lii. 100.

⁷ Quanquam etsi laicus aliquis pereunte dederit necessitate compulsus, quod cum ipse acciperet, quomodo dandum esset addidit,

nescio an pie quisquam dixerit esse repetendum. Nulla enim cogente necessitate si fiat, alieni muneris usurpatio est: si autem necessitas urgeat, aut nullum, aut veniale delictum est. Sed et si nulla necessitate usurpetur, et a quolibet cuilibet detur, quod datum fuerit non potest dici non datum, quamvis

has been given cannot be said to be not given,' of course begs the question as to validity, but it shows clearly enough St. Augustine's own opinion.

As to still more irregular kinds of baptism, administered in a play, or by one who was himself unbaptized, Augustine's testimony is explicit that such questions had never been brought before a general, or even a provincial, council. He therefore speaks uncertainly; but says that if he were sitting in a council where such points were raised, his disposition would be to say that he had no doubt that 'those have baptism who have received it anywhere and from any persons, consecrated in the words of the gospel, without dissimulation, and with some degree of faith.' But if there was no society of believers, and no faith, or if the whole thing were done in jest, or as a piece of acting, he said he would suspend his judgment, and suggest that prayer should be made for some revelation of the will of God, unless others could quote an authoritative precedent.⁸ Similarly, in his treatise against Parmenian,

recte dici possit illicite datum.—
Cont. Epist. Parm. II. xiii. 29.

⁸ Solet etiam quæri, utrum approbandum sit baptisma, quod ab eo qui non accipit, accipitur, si forte hoc curiositate aliqua didicit, quemadmodum dandum sit: et utrum nihil intersit, quo animo accipiat ille cui datur, cum simulatione, an sine simulatione: si cum simulatione, utrum fallens, sicut in ecclesia; vel in ea quæ putatur ecclesia; an jocans, sicut in mimo. . . . Verumtamen, si quis forte me in eo concilio constitutum, ubi talium rerum quæstio versaretur, non præcedentibus talibus, quorum

sententias sequi mallet, urgeret ut dicerem quid ipse sentirem: si eo modo affectus essem, quo eram cum ista dictarem; nequaquam dubitarem habere eos baptismum qui ubicumque et a quibuscumque illud verbis evangelicis consecratum, sine sua simulatione, et cum aliqua fide accepissent: quanquam eis ad salutem spiritualem non prodesset, si charitate caruissent, qua catholicæ insererentur ecclesiæ. . . . Ubi autem neque societas ulla esset ita credentium, neque ille qui ibi acciperet, ita crederet, sed totum ludicre et mimice et joculariter ageretur, utrum approbandus

he says, after speaking of lay Church baptism, ‘It is another question whether baptism can also be given by those who never were Christians; nor should anything be rashly affirmed concerning this, without the authority of as great a council as would be sufficient for so great a matter.’⁹

In an epistle to Fortunatus, quoted by Gratian as Augustine’s, though perhaps only the writing of a contemporary, the validity of lay Church baptism, in cases of necessity, is stated as a current belief of the time. ‘In necessity,’ says the writer, ‘when bishops or priests or any other ministers are not to be found, and the danger of him who seeks it is urgent, lest he should end this life without that sacrament, we are wont to hear that even laymen are wont to give the sacrament.’ But even then, their authority is supposed to be derived indirectly from our Lord through the apostles.¹

Thus, at the end of the fourth century, the doctrine of the minister of baptism stood apparently in this posi-

esset baptismus qui sic daretur; divinum iudicium per alicujus revelationis oraculum, concordi oratione et impensis supplicii devotione gemitibus implorandum esse censerem: ita sane, ut post me dicturos sententias, ne quid jam exploratum et cognitum afferrent, humiliter exspectarem.—*De Bapt.* vii. liii. 101, 102.

⁹ Et hæc quidem alia quæstio est, utrum et ab iis qui nunquam fuerunt Christiani possit baptismus dari: nec aliquid temere inde affirmandum est sine auctoritate tanti concilii quantum tantæ rei sufficit.—*Cont. Epist. Parm.* II.

xiii. 30.

¹ In necessitate, cum episcopi, aut presbyteri, aut quilibet ministrorum non inveniuntur, et urget periculum ejus, qui petit, ne sine isto sacramento hanc vitam finiat, etiam laicos solere dare sacramentum, quod acceperunt, solemus audire.—*Ap. Grat. Decret.* III., *De Consecr.* iv. 21.

In eodem sacramento sic etiam auctoritas traditionis per Dominum nostrum ad apostolos, per illos autem ad episcopos, et alios sacerdotes, vel etiam laicos Christianos ab eadem origine et stirpe venientes.—*Ibid.* 36.

tion. In the East formal heresy, at least upon the Blessed Trinity, invalidated baptism. In the West all baptism was accepted, if administered by priests who had received valid ordination, even though they might have been excommunicated, or had separated themselves from the unity of the Church; but, according to St. Augustine, such baptism was unprofitable until reconciliation had been effected. This limitation was probably his own, rather than that of the ecclesiastics of the time. It was prompted, no doubt, by a desire to restrain lax tendencies of practice, without repudiating heretical baptism. The attempt was not entirely successful. His views upon the concurrence of validity with ineffectiveness did not obtain universal consent, and it must be allowed that some of his arguments are fairly open to criticism. But, when he is quoted in evidence of the sufficiency of irregular ministrations, it ought not to be forgotten that he guarded the opinion by important qualifications. The acceptance of baptism by lay churchmen in the East, in the fourth century, is uncertain; but in the West it was probably accepted generally, if urgency had justified it. If there was no urgency, St. Augustine, at any rate, believed it still to be valid. Baptism by the unbaptized, or in a play, like that attributed to Athanasius, was still felt to be of questionable validity.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES.—CENT. V—VIII.

Bishops, priests, and deacons—Heretical baptism in the East: Timotheus Presbyter, Quinisext council, Theodore Studites, &c.—Lay baptism in the East: John Moscus, Quinisext council—Heretical baptism in the West: Council of Arles; the Popes; ecclesiastical writers—Lay baptism in the West: abroad; in England—Baptism by the unbaptized—Baptism by pagans.

THE Middle Ages is a wide term, taken by some to cover the whole period from about the fourth or fifth century to the Reformation. Others date its beginning from the accession of Charlemagne. As the baptismal rules before and after about that time did slightly differ, it will be convenient to break the history there, and to examine first what may be called the early middle ages, from the fifth to the eighth century. It is a period marked by no great controversies on the subject of the minister of baptism. Only occasional canons and incidental references throw some light on current usage.

Bishops still continued during this period to hold the special prerogative of administering baptism. So strictly was this sometimes carried out in actual practice that the Acts of the council of Chalcedon, in 451, record a letter from the people of Edessa, begging that Ibas, their bishop, might return to them before Easter, that he might attend to the teaching and baptizing of the

catechumens.¹ This, of course, would have reference only to cases of adults. Great stringency is also shown by a letter from some of the Italian clergy, on another occasion, praying for the return of Dacius, Bishop of Milan, because during his enforced absence from the see for a period of fifteen or sixteen years, most of his suffragans had died, and numbers of people were passing away unbaptized for want of a bishop.²

It was partly, no doubt, in order to reserve baptism as much as possible to bishops, that the seasons for its solemn administration were still restricted. The exigencies of the Church required, however, that they should not be confined simply to Easter and Pentecost. In the East, the Epiphany had been added in the latter half of the fourth century;³ and some time later, in the West, Christmas Day and the feasts of martyrs came to be generally adopted in certain Churches. The popes, however, regarded the multiplication of days with more or less disfavour, and so did some local councils. In circumstances of necessity any time was permissible.⁴

The practical working of the Church demanded that priests should often baptize; and many, if not most, of the bishops evidently allowed their presbyters to assist them at the great public baptisms at Easter and other special days. That they were too much inclined to baptize without the due subordination to the bishop which this ensured may be gathered not only from the

¹ Conc. Chalced. Actio x.

² See Martene, *De Ant. Rit.* I. i. 3 (2).

³ Greg. Naz. *Orat.* xl. See *Dict. Christ. Ant.* vol. i. p. 165 for references.

⁴ Siric. *Ad Himer.* Ep. xvi.;

Leo, *Ad Episc. Sicil.* Ep. xvi.;

Gelas. *Ad Episc. Lucan.* Ep. ix.;

Conc. Gerundense (Gerona), 517,

can. 4; Conc. Autissiodurense

(Auxerre), 578, can. 18; Conc.

Matisconense (Mâcon), 585, can.

3; &c.

canons restricting baptism to solemn days, but also from those which more directly restrained priests from a free exercise of their baptismal commission. Thus a council at Seville, in 618, forbade priests to enter the baptistery, or to baptize, in the presence of a bishop; ⁵ and another at Vern, in 755, prohibited them from baptizing except by order of their bishop. ⁶ There was no dispute as to their possessing the power to baptize. The intention was only to prevent them from exercising it, as a matter of discipline; and apparently to emphasise the fact that, when they did baptize, it was but as delegates of the bishop, who was the source of their authority.

The restrictions upon deacons were greater than upon priests. Yet their power to give the sacrament is nowhere denied, and the regulation of its exercise is to be regarded chiefly as disciplinary. Therefore in circumstances of urgency it was usually considered to be their duty to baptize. Theodoret says so, in the East, in the middle of the fifth century, supposing no priest to be at hand. ⁷ This, too, was the usual practice of the West. A canon of a Roman synod, at the end of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century, says that no licence had ever been given to deacons to baptize the sick; yet it allows that necessity had excused their usurpation of the permission. The same decree speaks of deacons, together with priests, as baptizing at Easter under the direction of the bishop. ⁸ As time

⁵ Neque coram episcopo licere presbyteris in baptisterium introire, neque presente antistite infantem tingere.—Conc. Hispal. II., can. 7.

⁶ Conc. Vernense, can. 8.

⁷ Πρεσβυτέρου γὰρ οὐ παρόντος,

καὶ τῆς χρείας κατεπειγούσης, ἀναγκάζεται καὶ διάκονος προσφέρειν τῷ δεομένῳ τὸ βάπτισμα.—Theod. *In 2 Paralip.* xxxiii.

⁸ Paschæ tempore presbyter et diaconus per parochias dare ro-

went on necessity became a recognised plea for baptism by deacons. The prohibitions of their ministry under other circumstances, put forth from time to time, probably may be taken to imply that they were occasionally over ready to baptize without sufficient warrant.⁹

On heretical baptism the usage of the fifth to the eighth centuries simply followed the precedents of earlier periods.

In the East, about the year 500, Timotheus, then presbyter, afterwards patriarch of Constantinople, states the rule of his day, which he says was that of the ancient catholic Church, preserved in the patriarchates and metropolitan Churches. He gives a long and detailed

missionem peccatorum et ministerium implere consueverunt, etiam præsentem episcopo; in fontem quoque ipsi descendunt, illi in officio sunt, sed episcopi nomini facti summa conceditur. Reliquis vero temporibus, ubi ægritudinis necessitas consequi unumquemque compellit, specialiter presbytero licentia est per salutaris aquæ gratiam dare indulgentiam peccatorum, quoniam et munus ipsi licet causa mundationis offerre; diaconis vero nulla licentia invenitur esse concessa, sed quod semel forte contigit usurpare, per necessitatem dicuntur excusari, nec postea in securitate commissuri.—*Synod. Roman. ad Gallos Episcopos*, can. 7. The exact date is uncertain.

⁹ Absque episcopo vel presbytero baptizare non audeant, nisi, prædictis fortasse officiis longius constitutis, necessitas extrema compellat.—Gelas. *Ad Episc. Lucan.* Ep. ix. 7. (492-6.)

Si diaconus aut presbyter pro reatu suo se ab altaris communione sub pœnitentis professione submoverit, sic quoque si alii defuerint et causa certæ necessitatis exoritur, poscentem baptismum liceat baptizare.—*Concilium Aurelianense I*, (Orleans), can. 12. (511.)

Unde constat baptismum solis sacerdotibus esse tractandum, ejusque mysterium nec ipsis diaconibus explere est licitum absque episcopo vel presbytero, nisi his procul absentibus ultima languoris cogat necessitas.—Isid. *De Eccles. Officiis*, II. xxv. 9. (d. 636.)

Patet ergo (quoting Matt. xxviii. 19, John xx. 21) solis sacerdotibus dare baptismum esse permissum. Cujus rei ministerium absque episcopo vel presbytero, nec diaconibus est concessum, nisi illis longepositis ultima necessitas, vel languoris vel periculi, cogat.—Hildefonsus Tolet. *De Cognitione Bapt.* cxvi. (d. 667.)

list of heretics, divided into three classes—those who are to be baptized, those who are to be anointed, and those who are only to renounce their errors, on admission into the communion of the Church. The grounds on which the heresies are sorted out are not always very clear; but so far as rebaptism was concerned, the orthodoxy of faith in the Blessed Trinity was of course the main consideration.¹ This was practically the principle of St. Basil.

The quinisext council in Trullo, in 691, adopted the precise words of the seventh canon of Constantinople,² only interpolating an additional sentence, directing the rebaptism of Paulianists.³ It also set its imprimatur on the African decrees under St. Cyprian, and on the epistles, now called canonical, of St. Basil.⁴ The African judgments are certainly more stringent in tone than the seventh canon of the second general council and the ninety-fifth of the Trullan. They can be made to harmonise only by understanding that the council in Trullo accepted the principle of Cyprian's rule, that baptism outside the Church was null, and then took the later enumeration of various heresies as deciding which should be considered to be thus outside her communion. That St. Cyprian himself would probably have excluded more separatists than these councils did, does not affect the principle involved. There is, therefore, no inconsistency in the Trullan adoption of both the African and Constantinopolitan rule. The canons of the quinisext council are of paramount authority to this day in the

¹ Tim. Presb. *De Recep. Hæret.*, Migne, *Pat. Græc.* tom. lxxxvi. pp. 11-67.

² See *ante*, p. 79, note 8.

³ Περὶ δὲ τῶν Παυλιανιστῶν τῆ

καθολικῆ ἐκκλησίᾳ ὅρος ἐκτίθεται, ἀναβαπτίζεσθαι αὐτοὺς ἐξ ἅπαντος.—*Conc. Trull. can. 95.*

⁴ *Ibid.* can. 2.

East, where it is numbered as the sixth general council of the Church.

St. John Damascene (d. cir. 760) mentions that the true form of words is necessary, but does not further go into details as to the effect of heresy upon the validity of baptism.⁵

Half a century later, at quite the beginning of the ninth century, Theodore the Studite gives a list of heresies, like that of Timotheus, but less full. He resolves the question, so far as it concerns the ministry of baptism, into a consideration simply of the accuracy of the formula.⁶ Thus, on a somewhat different principle, the East had arrived at almost the same practical rule as the West, accepting the proper words of administration as a sufficient guarantee of accurate faith, for the purposes of baptism, without inquiring too minutely into the interpretation which might sometimes be put on them by the person who baptized.

Of lay baptism within the Church there is very little more evidence in the East, during the early middle ages, than in the previous centuries; but it would seem that some modified form of its recognition gradually crept in.⁷

John Moscus, who wrote in the latter part of the sixth century, tells a story of some who were travelling

⁵ Joan. Damas. *De Fide Orthodoxa*, IV. ix.

⁶ Αἰρετικούς ὁ ἀποστολικὸς κανὼν ἐκείνους ἔφη, τοὺς μὴ εἰς ὄνομα Πατρὸς καὶ Υἱοῦ καὶ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος βαπτισθέντας καὶ βαπτίζοντας.—Theod. Stud. *Naucratio filio*, Ep. I. xl., Migne, *Pat. Græc.* tom. xcix. p. 1051.

⁷ Reference is sometimes made

to a canon of John the Faster, Patriarch of Constantinople (585–595), as decreeing that children may be baptized by others than a priest in necessity; but I am unable to find it. Probably his 24th canon is intended, which exacts penalties on parents who suffer a child to die unbaptized. See Πηδάλιον, p. 712, with note (3).

together, when one of the party, a Jew, fell ill and appeared likely to die. As he was unable to proceed they felt obliged to leave him behind. He implored them to baptize him first. 'It is not permitted to us to do so,' they replied, 'for we are laymen, and that is the work of priests and bishops.' He still, however, persisted in his request, which was the more difficult to grant, because, as the story goes, they were in a desert and had no water. At last one of the company ventured to baptize him with sand, upon which he immediately recovered, and was able to continue his journey. Arrived at Ascalon, they reported the circumstances to Dionysius, the bishop. He assembled his clergy to consult as to the validity of the baptism. The discussion among them seems to have turned entirely on the question of whether sand could be validly used in necessity, and not upon whether laymen could baptize. The opinions being discordant, the bishop eventually directed that he should be rebaptized in the Jordan. The story is probably a fiction; but it is interesting in reference to the minister of baptism, as showing that the popular impression was that the laity could not baptize, but that the more authoritative opinion of the clergy would not have repudiated the baptism solely on that ground.⁸

A canon of the quinisext council, in 691, has been quoted as implying that lay baptism was allowed in certain cases. It only says, however, 'Let no one of those who are set among the laity administer by himself the divine mysteries, when a bishop, priest, or

⁸ Joan. Mose. *Pratum Spirituale*, clxxvi. The story is referred to afterwards by Glycas, *Hist.* III., and

Hamartolus, *Chronicon*, III. cli., with apparent credit.

deacon is present.’⁹ The terms are too general to build much upon it; but Theodore the Studite understood it to permit lay baptism, for he says that ‘the sixth council, in the divine canons, allows that a layman may himself give the sacrament, if a priest is not present,’ and then goes on to apply it to a question about baptism by one who was not in holy orders. He says he would not be so rash as to direct such a one to baptize; but, so far as he was able to judge, he thought a person was not to be condemned who did it in circumstances of necessity. He appeals to early authorities in support of his opinion, and specially refers, without any hint as to a doubt about its genuineness, to the story of Alexander and Athanasius.¹ His hesitation shows that lay baptism cannot have been in common use, or under ordinary sanction, while his interpretation of the Trullan canon shows also that the idea was not absolutely strange.

In the West, the baptismal formula seems to have been the only test of orthodox baptism. Heresy, as such, did not invalidate its ministrations, if the words were not tampered with.

Thus, the second council of Arles, in 452, decreed that the Photinians and Paulianists were to be rebaptized. The council of Laodicea, in the previous century, had accepted Photinian baptism; but the sect

⁹ Μηδείς τῶν ἐν λαϊκοῖς τεταγμένων ἐαυτῷ θείων μυστηρίων μεταδιδότω παρόντος ἐπισκόπου ἢ πρεσβυτέρου ἢ διακόνου.—Conc. Trull. can. 58. Mr. Baldwin writes to me, ‘I do not think this can possibly refer to public baptism, and it is impossible that

it can refer to private baptism. Can it refer to the *distribution* of the consecrated elements? The “divine mysteries” is almost always the eucharist.’

¹ Theod. Stud. *Ad Anton. Dyrhachii*, Ep. II. clvii.

had degenerated, and there can be little doubt, from its association with the Paulianists, that it had now abandoned the proper form. That this was the ground upon which its baptisms were rejected is clear from the fact that the next canon allows the baptism of the Bonosiaci, also an episcopal sect, for the express reason that the true formula was used.²

The popes, from time to time, are found laying down the Roman rule as dependent entirely upon the words used in the administration.

Innocent I. (402–407) says the Novatians are to be received only with imposition of hands, because they are baptized in Christ's Name.³ He speaks similarly of Arian converts, who, having obtained the form of baptism, were not to be rebaptized. Yet, like St. Augustine, he says that they could not have the Holy Ghost in heresy, and therefore needed formal reconciliation to make their baptism effective.⁴

St. Leo (440–461) writes similarly that 'those who have received baptism from heretics are to be confirmed by invocation of the Holy Spirit alone, with imposition

² Photinianos, sive Paulianistas, secundum patrum statuta baptizari oportere.—Conc. Arelat. II. can. 16. Bonosiacos autem ex eodem errore venientes, quos sicut Arianos baptizari in Trinitate manifestum est, si interrogati fidem nostram ex toto corde confessi fuerint, cum chrismate et manus impositione in ecclesia recipi sufficit.—Can. 17.

³ Ut venientes a Novatianis vel Montensibus per manus tantum impositionem suscipiantur; quia, quamvis ab hereticis, tamen in Christi nomine sunt baptizati.—Inn. *Ad Victric. Ep. ii.* 8.

⁴ Eorum laicos conversos ad Dominum, sub imagine poenitentiae ac sancti Spiritus sanctificatione per manus impositionem suscipimus . . . quoniam quibus solum bapisma ratum esse permittimus, quod utique in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti perficitur, nec sanctum Spiritum eos habere ex illo bapismate illisque mysteriis arbitramur: quoniam cum a catholica fide eorum auctores desciscerent, perfectionem Spiritus, quam acceperant, amiserunt.—Inn. *Ad Alex. Ant. Ep. xxiv.* 3.

of hands, because they had received the mere form of baptism without the virtue of sanctification.'⁵

St. Gregory the Great (590–604), in answer to Quiricus, a bishop, says that the decision of the fathers is that those who have been baptized in the Name of the Trinity are to be received variously, by unction, by laying on of hands, or by an open profession of the true faith; and he adds that then their baptism, bestowed ineffectually in heresy, obtains the power of cleansing. All turned on the formula, for he insists on the necessity of baptism for converts from sects who did not use the true form, as the Cataphrygians, the Montanists, and the Bonosiaci, who seem to have abandoned the orthodox words soon after the second council of Arles.⁶

More than a century after, Gregory II. (715–731), speaking expressly of unworthy priests, says that if anyone baptizes in due form, the baptism may not be repeated, because the grace depends entirely on the Name of the Trinity.⁷

Pope Zachary, soon after (741–752), says that heretical baptism is valid.⁸

⁵ Nam hi qui baptismum ab hæreticis acceperunt, cum antea baptizati non fuissent, sola invocatione Spiritus sancti per impositionem manuum confirmandi sunt, quia formam tantum baptismi sine sanctificationis virtute sumpserunt.—Leo, *Ad Nicet.* Ep. clix. 7. Comp. *Ad Neon. Raven.* Ep. clxvi. 2; *Ad Rustic.* Ep. clxvii. 18.

⁶ Et quidem ab antiqua patrum institutione didicimus, ut quilibet apud hæresim in Trinitatis nomine baptizantur, cum ad sanctam ecclesiam redeunt, aut unctione christi, aut impositione manus, aut

sola professione fidei ad sinum matris ecclesiæ revocentur.—Greg. *Ad Quiricum*, Ep. xi. lxxvii. Comp. *Ad Univ. Episc. Ital.* Ep. i. cxvii.

⁷ In his tua dilectio teneat antiquum morem ecclesiæ, quia quisquis in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti baptizatus est, rebaptizari eum minime licet. Non enim in nomine baptizantis, sed in nomine Trinitatis, hujus gratiæ donum percipitur.—Greg. II. *Ad Bonif.* Ep. xiv. 8.

⁸ Quicumque baptizatus fuerit ab hæreticis in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti, nullo modo debet

The testimony of other than popes is to the same effect.

Gennadius, at the end of the fifth century, says the Name of the Trinity is essential and sufficient. He gives a list of sects, some episcopal and some not, whose baptism was void, because they did not use it; but makes no point of the lack of ordination in those who had no bishop. All turned on the formula.⁹

Fulgentius Ferrandus, deacon of Carthage, soon after, in a digest of earlier canons, sums up the general rule to be ‘that it is not allowable to rebaptize heretics, baptized in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.’¹

St. Gregory of Tours, late in the sixth century, speaks several times of heretics being received by unction, and does not hint at rebaptism.²

St. Isidore, Bishop of Seville, at the commencement of the seventh century, gives the same rule, stating as the reason for allowing heretical baptism, that ‘baptism is not of man, but of Christ; therefore it makes no difference whether a heretic or a faithful person baptizes.’³

So also, the Venerable Bede, a century later, in England, says that baptism by a heretic, a schismatic,

rebaptizari, sed per solam manus impositionem purgari.—Zach. *Ad Bonif.* Ep. vii.

⁹ Gemad. *De Eccles. Dog.* lii.; comp. *De Script. Eccles.* xxvii.

¹ Fulgentius Ferrandus, *Braviatio Canonum*, 173–178.

² Greg. Turon. *Hist.* ii. 31, 34; iv. 27, 28; v. 38; ix. 15.

³ Hæretici autem, si tamen in Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti

attestatione docentur baptismum suscepisse, non iterum baptizandi, sed solo chrismate et manus impositione purgandi sunt. Baptismus enim non est hominis, sed Christi; ideoque nihil interest hæreticus, an fidelis baptizet. . . . Habet quidem hæreticus baptismum Christi, sed quia extra unitatem fidei est, nihil ei prodest.—Isidore, *De Eccles. Officiis*, II. xxv. 9, 10.

or a wicked person, is not to be iterated, if it is given in the Name of the Trinity, ‘lest the confession or invocation of so great a Name shall seem to be annulled.’⁴

To these testimonies may be added the canons attributed to St. Patrick, which, whatever may be their date in their present form, are a witness to the practice of at least some period of the early middle ages. One of these canons falls in with the general teaching of the time, that baptism in due form was valid from all, though it contemplates the possibility of baptizing, not rebaptizing, in doubtful cases. Whether it refers to heresy, or to any but baptism by priests, cannot very easily be determined.⁵

As a rule, the consideration of heretical baptism was not complicated with any question of the ordination of the minister, because all, or nearly all, the non-episcopal sects mutilated the formula, and this was sufficient to invalidate the baptism without further inquiry. Many sects whose baptism was accepted were not indeed sound in the faith; but the evidence shows that internal heresy, even upon the Blessed Trinity, had ceased to influence the decision as to the validity of a baptism, so long as external orthodoxy was maintained by the use of the essential form.

⁴ Sive enim hæreticus, sive schismaticus, sive facinorosus quisque in confessione Sanctæ Trinitatis baptizet, non valet ille, qui ita baptizatus est, a bonis catholicis rebaptizari, ne confessio vel invocatio tanti nominis videatur annullari.—Beda, *In Joan. Evang. Expos.* cap. iii.

⁵ Statuunt ne rebaptizati [sint], qui symboli traditionem a quocunque acceperunt, quia non inficit semen seminantis iniquitas. Sin vero, non est rebaptizare, sed baptizare. Non ablucendos autem lapsos a fide credamus, nisi per impositionem manus accipiantur.—Synod. S. Patricii, 7.

Some of the opinions just quoted may possibly cover cases of lay, as well as heretical, baptism; but it is very doubtful whether any baptisms which combined the elements of lay and heretical administration at once, had as yet received formal sanction. Baptism by lay churchmen, however, was becoming more and more recognised in the West, in time of necessity. Gelasius, at the very close of the fifth century, and Isidore, a hundred years later, after saying that deacons might only baptize in extreme necessity, add that permission was often conceded, in like urgency, to lay Christians.⁶ By saying that this was ‘often’ allowed they may imply that agreement was not universal. But Hildefonsus, Bishop of Toledo, in the seventh century, says the same thing without any qualification, and his work is chiefly compiled from authorities antecedent to his own date.⁷

In England, in the seventh century, Archbishop Theodore also states the permission to lay churchmen unhesitatingly; only limiting it by saying that they were not to baptize rashly, and that anyone who did so was to be excommunicated, and to be incapable of ordination. Either he, or some canonist in his name, says further, ‘It is allowed to all the faithful, when by chance they have found those who are dying to be unbaptized, urged by necessity, to baptize: yea, it is commanded to snatch souls from the devil by baptism.’ Even women might baptize, but not unless the necessity

⁶ Quod et laicis Christianis facere plerumque conceditur.—Gelas. *Ad Episc. Lucan.* Ep. ix. 7. Quod etiam a laicis fidelibus plerumque permittitur, ne quisquam sine remedio salutari de sæculo evocetur.—Isidore, *De Eccles. Officiis*, II. xxv. 9. For previous

part of these sentences, see *ante*, p. 115.

⁷ Quod clericis et fidelibus laicis fieri utcumque conceditur, ut nullus e sæculo sine vitali remedio transisse videatur.—Hildef. *De Cog. Bapt.* cxvi. For previous part of sentence, see *ante*, p. 115.

was most extreme.⁸ The so-called Excerptions of Egbert, Archbishop of York, repeat the injunction that all the faithful are bidden to baptize in necessity. They are thought to belong to a later date than Egbert, probably to the extreme end of the period at present under examination.⁹

It does not necessarily follow, because lay Church baptism was accepted in necessity, that it was counted valid when there was no urgency, much less that baptism by any layman would inevitably hold good. Yet Egbert, in his Dialogue, a work of unquestioned genuineness, discussing the effect of ministrations by an unordained person who pretends to be a priest, says they are not to be set aside unless those who use them are aware of his disqualification. Even then, he says, baptism should not be repeated, although other acts seem to be less certain.¹ If this is to be taken as the

⁸ Si quis baptizat pro temeritate non ordinatus, abjiciendus est ab ecclesia, et nunquam ordinetur.—Theod. *Pœnit.* i. ix. 11. Omnibus fidelibus licet, ubi forte morituros invenerint non baptizatos, necessitate cogente, baptizare; immo præceptum est animas eripere a diabolo per baptismum.—Mulier baptizare non præsumat, nisi cogente necessitate maxima. The two last decrees appear not to be given in the most accurate versions of the Penitential of Theodore.

⁹ Egb. *Excerpt.* can. 95. They are given as Egbert's in Johnson's *English Canons, Lib. Ang. Cath. Theol.* vol. i. p. 235, and elsewhere. But they seem to contain extracts from the Capitularies of Charlemagne, whereas Egbert died in 766.

See Haddan and Stubbs, vol. iii. p. 415.

¹ Ministeria vero quæ, usurpato nomine sacerdotis, non dicatus ignorante populo peregit, minime credimus abjicienda, nam male bona ministrando ipse sibi reus, aliis non nocuit. Scienti autem causas minime detersas, et qui tamen particeps factus est damnati, quomodo tribuitur ei perfectio quæ in dante non erat, quam ipse accipere potest damnationem, utique qui per quod habuit per prava officia dedit, ut ejus particeps similem sortiatur excommunicationis sententiam. Sed hoc de baptismo accipi fas non est, quod iterari non debeat: reliqua vero ministeria per indignum data minus firma videntur.—Egb. *Dial.* v.

general view of the time, it would indicate the acceptance of lay baptism to a very wide extent.

Other cases began also to exercise the ingenuity of casuists. Among these was the question of baptism by persons who had themselves never been baptized. This was probably far from being a mere speculative proposition. The precautions which now ensure that a candidate for holy orders has been baptized were not possible in days when there were no registers. It was therefore worth inquiring what would be the effect of the ministrations of a man who had been ordained to the priesthood, which he was strictly incapable of receiving for want of being previously baptized. Theodore said that, even if the omission had been through ignorance, the baptisms which he conferred were invalid, and those whom he had baptized must be baptized again.² In some versions of the Penitential of Egbert, there is a similar direction, borrowed apparently from an earlier work; but the writer goes on to note that the Pope of Rome had decided differently, saying that the grace of the Holy Spirit was not in any man, but in the gift of baptism itself.³

The writer no doubt accurately states the Roman rule. A council at Compiègne, in 757, lays down 'that if anyone is baptized by an unbaptized priest, and the

² Si quis ordinatus est per ignorantiam antequam baptizetur, debent baptizari qui ab illo gentili baptizati fuerint, et ipse non ordinetur.—Theod. *Pœnit.* i. ix. 12. Comp. ii. ii. 13.

³ Quicumque presbyter, si norit quod non sit baptizatus, baptizetur, et omnes illi quos antea baptizaverat. Attamen papa Romanus

constituit, si missæ administrator vitiosus sit, vel paganus, quod servitium Spiritus sancti esset in dono baptismi, non tamen in hominis alicujus.—Egb. *Pœnit.* i. vii. It is given by Migne, Mansi, and Wilkins, but is not included by Haddan and Stubbs, who place this portion of the Penitential earlier than Egbert, vol. iii. p. 414.

Holy Trinity was invoked in his baptism, he is baptized, as says Sergius the Pope.⁴ Sergius was Bishop of Rome from 687 to 701. The conscious divergence of the English Penitential shows a characteristic independence of mind, which hesitated to accept all and every irregular ministration of baptism with the readiness which seemed to commend itself to the papal discipline.

Some limit, perhaps, was still set, even at Rome, on the extent to which baptism was to be accepted, when it came to be a question of baptism by pagans. The Decretum of Gratian, indeed, puts a passage into the mouth of Isidore, saying that ‘the Roman pontiff does not consider that the man who baptizes, but the Spirit of God, supplies the grace of baptism, even if he is a pagan who baptizes.’⁵ No such sentence is extant now in the works of Isidore; but, since it agrees with the quotation from the supposed Penitential of Egbert, it may have been the rule of his time. Gregory III. (731–741), however, seems to have been of a different opinion. Answering some questions of Boniface, he says, ‘As to those whom you assert to have been baptized by pagans, if it really is so, we command that you baptize them again in the Name of the Trinity.’⁶ St. Thomas Aquinas, however, adds, as a gloss, ‘that is, if

⁴ Quod si quis baptizatus est a presbytero non baptizato, et Sancta Trinitas in ipso baptismo invocata fuerit, baptizatus est, sicut Sergius papa dixit.—Conc. Compendiense, can. 9.

⁵ Romanus pontifex non hominem judicat, qui baptizat, sed Spiritum Dei subministrare gratiam baptismi, licet paganus sit, qui baptizat.—*Decretum*, II. causa 1,

quæst. i. 59; III. *De Consecr.* iv. 23. Comp. note on previous page.

⁶ Eosdemque, quos a paganis baptizatos esse asseruisti, si ita habetur, ut denuo baptizes in nomine Trinitatis, mandamus.—Greg. III. *Ad Bonif.* Ep. i. 1. In Gratian’s *Decretum*, III. *De Consecr.* iv. 52, the words are attributed to Gregory II., but this is clearly a mistake.

the form of the Church has not been observed.⁷ No doubt, the manner in which Gregory expresses himself is capable of this interpretation. But that he believed paganism to be a bar to baptism is shown by his adding an injunction that it is null if it is administered by a priest who has sacrificed to Jupiter or offered meats to idols.⁸ Whether he is speaking of a heathen priest, or of a Christian priest lapsed into heathenism, the inference is the same, that a pagan could not baptize.

⁷ Scilicet ecclesie forma non servata.—Aquin. *Summa*, III. lxvii. 5. Bellarmine adopts the same gloss, *De Bapt.* vii.

⁸ Eos etiam qui se dubitant

fuisse baptizatos, vel qui a presbytero Jovi mactante et carnes immolantias vescente baptizati sunt, ut rebaptizentur præcipimus.—Greg. III. *Ad Bonif.* Ep. i. 4.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LATER MIDDLE AGES.—CENT. IX—XV.

The Eastern Church: on heretical baptism; on lay baptism—The Western Church: bishops and priests; deacons—Heretical and lay baptism in West: popes; canonists and schoolmen, Gratian, Raymond, Aquinas, De Burgo, Lyndwood, &c.—The Western councils abroad—The English councils and rubrics—Estimate of the force of mediæval testimony on the general doctrine.

DURING the succession of centuries which form the more proper middle ages, the records of the East on the subject of the minister of baptism are comparatively scanty, at any rate so far as they are commonly known to us Westerns. They are, however, quite sufficient for the purpose of ascertaining the common usage of the Church.

The East was troubled less by heresies in the later middle ages than she had been in earlier times. Many of the more obscure sects ceased to exist altogether, and the long lists of heretical bodies must gradually have become to a very great extent obsolete. But the old principle of the East, that a wrong faith in the Blessed Trinity invalidated a baptism, still held its ground.

Thus, in about the year 1200, Nicetas Chroniates enumerates the early heresies, and follows the original teaching as to reception in different cases by baptism and by anointing.¹

¹ Nicetas Chroniates, *Thesaurus Biblioth. Patrum*, 1618, t. xii. pars *Orthodoxæ Fidei*, iii. See La Bigne 1, pp. 543 seq.

Matthew Blastar, who wrote in the fourteenth century, relates that in the twelfth, at a synod in Constantinople under the patriarch Lucas, it was discussed whether infants who had been baptized by Mahometans were to be baptized, or only anointed, on reception into the Church. The council decreed, without opposition, that they must be baptized.² Whatever form of words the infidels used, the determination, on the original Eastern principles, would have been the same.

Blastar also repeats St. Basil's three-fold division of those outside the orthodox communion, into heretics, schismatics, and separatists, with his injunction that all heretics shall be baptized on reconciliation. He applies St. Basil's rule to a long list of sectaries of earlier and later date, adding that the East requires all who are baptized by schismatics with only immersion to be re-baptized.³ The reference is of course to the 7th canon of Constantinople.⁴

After the division between East and West, in the eleventh century, this matter of the one immersion had been a constant charge of the Greeks against the Latins. The Western practice varied. Sometimes the trine and sometimes a single immersion was used. Gregory the Great, about the year 600, and a council at Toledo, in 633, had defended the single immersion,⁵ and probably it had become common. To the Easterns it was a sufficient cause for branding the Westerns promiscuously with heresy, and for invalidating their baptisms. Michael Cerularius, Patriarch of Constantinople, in the middle of the eleventh century, just after the great

² Blastar, *Syntagma*, B. cap. iii. *De infantibus Agarenorum baptizatis.*

³ *Ibid.* cap. ii. *De Hæreticis.*

⁴ See *ante*, p. 79, note 8.

⁵ Greg. I. *Ad Leand. Episc.* Ep. i. xliii. Conc. Tolet. IV. can. 6.

rupture, was already rebaptizing converts from the West, when they had previously received only one immersion.⁶ Zonaras and Balsamon, the one early and the other late in the twelfth century, without referring directly to Western Christendom, speak of single immersion as invalid.⁷ Rebaptism was, therefore, the rule. The Westerns naturally resented this usage, which implicitly involved a charge of vital heresy. The fourth Lateran council at Rome, in 1215, entered its protest against it, saying that ‘the Greeks presumed with a rash boldness to rebaptize those who had been baptized by Latins; and some, as we have heard, still do not fear to do this.’⁸ Nor did they fear to continue to do it. Half a century later, Meletius the Confessor, an authority among the Greeks, is found writing against the validity of Latin baptism with one immersion.⁹

About this time, however, the regulation for the rebaptism of converts from the West became partially and temporarily relaxed. Michael Palæologus, who engaged in fruitless efforts to obtain agreement between the Greeks and the Latins, favoured the Western practice of baptism so far as to admit its validity.¹ At any rate, where the three immersions had been used, the Easterns were willing to accept Western baptism, and the rule, at the end of the fourteenth century, was to receive converts thus baptized only by anointing with oil.² Not long after, in 1438, met the council of Florence. Mark of Ephesus, one of the representatives of the Greeks, at its twenty-fifth session, said, ‘We are

⁶ See Constantine Oiconomos, *Tà Σωζόμενα Ἐκκλησιαστικὰ Συγγράμματα*, Athens, 1862, tom. i. p. 498.

⁷ On Conc. Const. can. 7, see *ante*, p. 79, note 8.

⁸ Conc. Lat. IV. can. 43.

⁹ Constantine Oiconomos, t. i. p. 499.

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Ibid.* p. 503.

separated from the Latins by nothing less than that they are not only schismatics, but also heretics.’³ Yet, partly to avoid the risk of rebaptism, and partly to encourage individuals to reconcile themselves with the orthodox Church of the East, Mark was willing that even those who had received only one immersion should be accepted without rebaptism.⁴ Apparently for some time it became the usual practice of the East to be satisfied with unction alone as the rite of reconciliation, although not according to any uniform rule.

This relaxation of the rigid usage brings out a curious characteristic of Greek theologians in dealing with the ministry of baptism, which it is necessary to mark in order to understand what at first sight appears to be a vacillating discipline. The Greek Church takes its stand upon the Apostolical Canons in all their strictness, as rejecting heretical baptism. But it is held that her rulers may modify the application of this principle by considerations of what is called ‘economy’ (*οἰκονομία*), a word for which our nearest equivalent is ‘policy,’ although perhaps it hardly conveys a fair meaning of the original. It has been seen how the commentators on the *Πηδάλιον* apply it to the action of the second general council in admitting the baptism of Arians and Macedonians, in order to win them over to conversion, and to hinder their turning the great strength they possessed into attacks upon the Church. Similarly, they say, the orthodox Church modified its rule towards the West, in the mediæval centuries, ‘because the papacy then flourished, and had in its hands all the powers of the kings of Europe; wherefore, necessarily, if economy had not been used,

³ *Πηδάλιον*, p. 55 note.

⁴ Constantine Oiconomos, pp. 503, 504.

the pope would have stirred up the Latin races against the Eastern, bringing them into captivity, slaying them, and doing countless other terrible things to them.’⁵ Without quite admitting that this does perfect justice to her motives, it may readily be conceived that in the period of the greatest strength of papal power the East was not in a position to maintain a high-handed discipline towards the West. The loss of Constantinople, in 1453, left the Greek Church still further prostrate for a time; and a synod at Constantinople, in 1484, seeing no opening for a revival of the stringent decrees for rebaptism, framed a formulary for the reception of Western converts by unction and a renunciation of errors. This continued to be the usual method for some while after, until, seeing that the orthodox Church was reaping harm rather than profit from the indulgence, her bishops reverted to the older rigour, and began again to insist on the baptism of Latin converts.⁶

Thus the division of Christendom led to internal charges of heretical baptism, producing complications which subsist to the present day.

Lay Church baptism apparently got some footing in the East after a while, but at a later date than in the West, and with a constant strain of opposition against the practice.

Controversialists have hitherto failed to discover any trace of its acceptance earlier than two doubtful canons ascribed to Nicephorus, who was Patriarch of Constantinople at the beginning of the ninth century. These canons allow baptism by a monk, a deacon, and even

⁵ Πηδάλιον, p. 56. Comp. Constantine Oiconomos, *Letter*, tom. i. p. 493, *passim*. See *ante*, p. 80.

⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 505, 506.

by a layman, if a child is dying, and no priest is at hand. The father himself may under such circumstances baptize. The only absolute restriction is that the baptizer must be a Christian. The canons cannot be traced with certainty to any known council. These particular ones are not in all the copies of the canons of Nicephorus, and are probably a later addition. They are, however, included by Hermenopulus, in the twelfth century, in an epitome of Greek canons, and are referred to by Glycas in the same century. While, therefore, they cannot be urged as reliable evidence of the usage of the ninth century, they do show that lay baptism in extremity had received the sanction of some Eastern council or other before the twelfth.⁷

For the rest, the evidence of the middle ages is of the nature of a protest against lay baptism.

Georgius Hamartolus, about the middle of the ninth century, inveighs against those who allow lay men or women to baptize in cases of necessity. In proof of his contention he triumphantly quotes the story told by

⁷ In the Πηδάλιον they are given among seven later canons, appended to those which are certainly genuine. They are there quoted as follows: Κανών 5'. Κατὰ ἀνάγκην καὶ μοναχὸς ἰδιώτης καὶ ἀνίερος βαπτίζει παιδίον, ὁμοίως καὶ διάκονος.—Κανών 5'. Τὰ ἀβάπτιστα νήπια ὅταν δὲν ἦναι παρῶν ἱερέως, πρέπει νὰ τὰ βαπτίξῃ ὅποιος τύχη, κἂν καὶ ὁ ἴδιος πατὴρ αὐτῶν, ἢ ἄλλος οἰοσδήποτε ἄνθρωπος, μόνον νὰ ἦναι Χριστιανὸς, καὶ δὲν ἀμαρτάνει. A note to the sixth canon refers to Hermenopulus' epitome, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὁ λαϊκὸς προστίθεται εἰς τὸ νὰ βαπτίξῃ.—Πηδάλιον, p. 733.

There is much verbal discrepancy

between the canons as given here, and by Leunclavius, *Jus Græco-Romanum*, 1594, lib. III. p. 169 (quoted in Bingham, vol. viii. p. 92), and others. As they form the only canonical reference of the time, it may be as well to give this other version. Κανών 15'. Κατὰ περιστάσιν καὶ μοναχὸς λιτὸς βαπτίζει, ὡσαύτως καὶ διάκονος· καὶ λαϊκὸς δὲ, ἐὰν εὐρεθῇ [τις] εἰς τόπον, μὴ ὄντος ἱερέως.—Κανών 15'. Χρὴ τὰ ἀβάπτιστα νήπια, ἐὰν εὐρεθῇ τις εἰς τόπον, μὴ ὄντος ἱερέως, βαπτισθῆναι. Εἰ βαπτίσει δὲ [καὶ] ὁ ἴδιος πατὴρ, ἢ οἰοσδήποτε ἄνθρωπος, μόνον ἵνα ἔσθι Χριστιανὸς, οὐκ ἔστιν ἀμαρτία.

Moscus of the rebaptism of the Jew; and with more reason refers to the Apostolical Constitutions as evidence against lay baptism. He does not allow that even deacons may baptize, except strictly as assistants to bishops or priests.⁸

Michael Glycas, an Eastern historian of the middle of the twelfth century, also mentions the case of the Jew, together with a version of the story of Athanasius and Alexander, which strangely reverses its original shape by relating the decision as if it had been that the children were to be rebaptized. On the other side he quotes the canons of Nicephorus. His own bias was in the direction of rejecting lay baptism.⁹

In 1166, a synod in the Trullan hall at Constantinople, under Lucas Chrysoberges, was consulted by Manuel, Bishop of Heracleon, as to a case of one who had been baptized by a layman who pretended to be in holy orders. While admitting that there was an element of doubt in the question, the bishops decided that it was not fitting that uncertainty should exist as to whether a person was baptized or not, and that the individual must therefore be baptized by a priest in order to secure that he had valid baptism. They founded their ruling upon the 46th and 47th Apostolical Canons; and, with less force, on the 26th and 46th of Laodicea, which speak only of bishops and priests, but in a way too indirectly connected with the ministry of baptism to be of real weight on the point. The doubt felt by the council was not as to whether lay baptism was properly valid, but as to whether its inherent invalidity might be removed where it had been received in all good faith

⁸ Hamart. *Chronicon*, III. cli.,
Migne's *Pat. Græc.* vol. cx. p. 547.

⁹ Glycas, *Annales*, III., Migne's
Pat. Græc. vol. clviii. p. 459.

under the impression that the minister was a priest. If he had been recognised as a layman by the recipient, the bishops would not have had even that degree of hesitation which led them to debate the matter.¹

Theodore Scutariota, in the next century, the thirteenth, discusses the same question, and contests the position that the ignorance of the recipient makes baptism by a pretended priest valid, maintaining that no layman can baptize.²

Matthew Blastar, in the fourteenth century, referring to the council in Trullo in 1166, says that any argument which would make baptism valid when conferred by a feigned priest would equally make ordination valid if conferred by a feigned bishop, and this he regards as impossible. He was, therefore, against allowing the validity of lay baptism under any circumstances; and he says, if the case of Athanasius is pleaded in objection, it is to be remembered that no isolated incident can be taken as a safe precedent when it is contrary to the rulings of the canons of the Church.³

Early in the fifteenth century, Simon, Archbishop of Thessalonica, a Greek metropolitan, writes as though none but a priest would baptize, even in urgent necessity.⁴

Nicephorus, a Greek historian of the fourteenth

¹ Blastar, *Syntag.* B. cap. iii. *De baptizatis ab iis qui non ordinantur.*

² Theod. Scut. quoted by Cotelierius, *SS. Patrum Apost.*, 1698, Note on *Apost. Const.*, vol. i. 283.

³ Blastar, *Syntag.* B. cap. iii.

⁴ Sim. Thes. *De Sacramentis*, Migne's *Pat. Græc.* vol. clv. Arcudius, *De Concord. Eccles. Occid.*

et Orient., 1626, I. xi., p. 25, and Taylor, *Off. Minist.* iv. 8, *Works*, vol. xiv. p. 448, quote Simon as saying, Οὐδεὶς βαπτίζει εἰ μὴ χειροτονίαν ἔχει. The whole spirit of Simon's dissertation is in this strain, but I have not been able to identify the sentence, or any words quite so explicit.

century, declares that no one can baptize another who is not baptized himself.⁵

These references seem certainly to indicate that cases of lay baptism occurred in the East in the middle ages, but that whatever tendency there was to support them was met by a considerable weight of disfavour from those who still held to the old strict tradition of the Eastern Church.

In the West there is much more evidence. For the most part it is of a different character from that in the East.

The first point of importance was the relative position of bishops, priests, and deacons in the ministry of baptism. The peculiar right of bishops was partly maintained in the West, but to a continually decreasing extent. Baptism became less and less reserved for solemn seasons. Theoretically the old rule stood for a while, and it is adopted in the *Decretum* of Gratian in the twelfth century.⁶ Traces of it are to be found in use as late as the thirteenth century, in both France and England;⁷ but nearly everywhere it had given way by the tenth and eleventh centuries in the West, and indeed also in the East. Even on the days of solemn baptism,

⁵ He is writing against the Eunomeans. He says: *Suaque ipsorum arrogantia, dogma hoc instituerunt: tum quæ ipsi non acceperunt, aliis tradiderunt, quod sane stultum et stolidum est. Illud enim sua etiam ipsorum confessione constat, qui ipse baptismi sacris initiatus non sit, eum alios baptizare non posse: qui vero traditionis eorum more baptizatus non sit,*

eum pro non baptizato ab eis haberi, ut qui non legitime sacramento eo initiatus est.—*Niceph. Hist.* xi. xi. The Greek of this portion of the work is missing.

⁶ *Decretum*, III. *De Consecr.* iv. 11–18.

⁷ *Conc. Leodiense* (Liège), 1237; *Conc. Londinense* (London), 1237; *Conc. Wigornienne* (Worcester), 1240; &c.

bishops did not generally do more than baptize two or three of the candidates, leaving the remainder to their presbyters. Milan, alone among European dioceses, peculiar in this as in much else of its ceremonial, kept to the older way. There the bishop himself baptized on the eves of Easter and Pentecost, not only throughout the middle ages, but to a much later date, if not to the present day.⁸

When priests became the usual administrators of baptism, it was still sometimes only under direct sanction from the bishop, beyond the commission of their ordination. At Rome, down to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, even cardinals required the express permission of the pope.⁹ But by this date the ministry of baptism had generally come to be regarded as part of the ordinary office of a priest. The canons of the middle ages constantly speak of the parish priest as the natural ministrant of the sacrament. St. Thomas Aquinas, in the thirteenth century, says it so properly belongs to his office that a priest may baptize in the presence of a bishop, although no deacon or other person may baptize in the presence of a priest, since bishops and priests alone, and in common, have received the authority to execute the baptismal commission as part of their ecclesiastical functions.¹ Lyndwood, the English canonist of the fifteenth century, likewise asserts that the priest baptizes by virtue of his priestly office, giving references to older authorities in support of the assertion.²

⁸ Martene, *De Antiq. Rit.* I. i. 3; Pelliccia, *Polity of Christian Church*, p. 11.

⁹ Martene, I. i. 3.

¹ Aquin. *Summa*, III. lxxvii. 4.

² Lyndwood, *Provinciale*, III. 24, Oxf. ed., p. 241.

The limitations placed upon deacons were strict through the earlier centuries of this period, though they became gradually relaxed towards the end.

Burchard, Bishop of Worms, in the eleventh century, says that a deacon may baptize in case of danger, and that such a baptism only needs to be perfected by the bishop's confirmation.³

In England several canons are found rather later, restricting the exercise of baptism by deacons to grave necessity. Such were passed by councils at York in 1195, at Westminster in 1200, at Salisbury in 1217, at Durham in about 1220, at Oxford in 1222, at some unidentified place in about 1237, at St. Andrew's in 1242, as well as in the Constitutions of Archbishop Edmund in 1236. Two things were generally held necessary to justify a deacon in baptizing: first, that no priest could be got, and, secondly, that death appeared to be imminent.⁴ The rule was not, however, always kept; for Matthew Paris relates that a son of Henry III. was baptized in 1239 by the papal legate, who was probably a deacon, but certainly not a bishop or priest. There were no circumstances of necessity, for the Bishop of Carlisle was present. It was an irregularity of which the object must have been simply to pay a compliment to the pope.⁵

The schoolmen and canonists agree in asserting that deacons may only baptize in urgent need, but there was

³ Burchard Wormatiensis, *Decret.* 20, 92.

⁴ See the canons in Note at end of chapter.

⁵ xvi. calendas Julii nocte sequenti apud Westmonasterium natus est regi filius ex regina sua

Alienora. . . . Carleolensis vero episcopus infantem catechizavit. Legatus eundem baptizavit, licet non esset sacerdos; archiepiscopus autem Edmundus Cantuariensis ipsum confirmavit.—Matt. Paris, *Hist. Maj.* ad an. 1239.

a growing tendency to admit more and more distinctly that, when they did baptize, it was by virtue of their office and not by special indulgence. At first this was not allowed. Peter Lombard, in the twelfth century, quotes Isidore's decision that baptism was a function for priests, and that a deacon might only baptize by express permission, except in necessity.⁶ Cardinal Henricus de Segusio, commonly known as Hostiensis, in the next century, states the rule in similar terms.⁷ Aquinas, at about the same time, says the very name of 'deacon,' signifying 'minister,' shows that the office of the order is to assist, and not to take a principal part in administering sacraments. Hence it does not belong to the office of a deacon to baptize; yet, because of its necessity, he may bestow it when a priest cannot be found, and the urgency is great.⁸ But, a century later again, John de Burgo, in the *Pupilla Oculi*, putting the matter rather differently, says that in extreme necessity a deacon baptizes specially, in his own right, as a priest does ordinarily;⁹ and, later still, in the fifteenth

⁶ Lomb. *Sent.* iv. vi. a. See *post*, p. 144; and for Isidore, *ante*, p. 115 note.

⁷ Hoc tamen officium ad presbyterum tantum, vel episcopum, et diaconum in necessitate, vel de prædictorum mandato pertinet. *Host. Summa*, III. *De Bapt.*—*Quis possit vel debeat baptizare.*

⁸ Dicuntur autem 'diaconi,' quasi ministri, quia videlicet ad diaconos non pertinet aliquod sacramentum principaliter et quasi ex proprio officio præbere, sed adhibere ministerium aliis majoribus, in sacramentorum exhibitione. Et sic ad diaconum non pertinet quasi ex

proprio officio tradere sacramentum baptismi, sed in collatione hujus sacramenti et aliorum assistere et ministrare majoribus. . . . Quia baptismus est sacramentum necessitatis, permittitur diaconis, necessitate urgente, in absentia majorum, baptizare. — Aquin. *Summa*, III. lxvii. 1.

⁹ Nullus debet solemniter baptizare in ecclesianisi sacerdos: excepto necessitatis articulo. Potest vero diaconus in absentia presbyteri, si extrema necessitas imminet baptizandi, de jure suo solemniter ut sacerdotes communiter faciunt baptizare.—Burgo, *Pup. Oc.* ii. 2.

century, Lyndwood says the same, with the restriction that a deacon may never baptize in the presence of a priest, except by his particular direction.¹

The same disposition to allow the specific right of a deacon had shown itself abroad, for Eugenius IV., at the council of Florence, in 1439, associated deacons with priests in one sentence, as the natural ministers of baptism, in a case of necessity, somewhat distinguishing them in this respect from the laity.²

The mediæval ordinal, according to the use of both Rome and Sarum, attached the ministration of baptism to the diaconate, without restriction, saying simply that 'it belongs to the office of a deacon to baptize.'³ No doubt, in practice, the restraint in the presence of a priest, or under no circumstances of necessity, was ordinarily always maintained; but the omission of any such cautions as occur in the canons shows that there can be no reasonable question that the deacon of the middle ages baptized in his own right, by virtue of his office, however much he might be limited as to its exercise.

Heresy, in the West, ceased to hold any independent place in the consideration of the validity of baptism. It

¹ In casu necessitatis, absente presbytero, potest diaconus suo jure baptizare et corpus Christi erogare infirmis: sed in ecclesia præsente presbytero, non potest, etiamsi necessitas exigat, nisi jussus a presbytero, puta, cum multi sint qui indigent baptismo, et presbyter non potest omnibus sufficere.—Lynd. *Provinciale*, III. 24, ed. Oxf. p. 243.

² See Note at end of chapter.

³ Diaconum oportet ministrare ad altare et evangelium legere in ecclesia, baptizare, et communicare in vice presbyteri.—*Pontif. Anglic.* ann. 900. Diaconum oportet ministrare ad altare, et baptizare.—*Pontif. Salisbur.* ann. 600; *Pontif. Roman.* See Martene, *De Ant. Rit.* I. vii. 11, ed. 1783, vol. ii. pp. 37, 52, 84.

was lost in the comprehensive view, which became more and more current, that all baptism whatever was valid if given with water in the Name of the Trinity. This opinion, expressed by St. Augustine with diffidence and hesitation, because no general council had determined the point, was now put forth without hesitation by those in authority, and no one seems to have controverted it.

Thus, the popes decided entirely in this direction. Nicholas I., replying, in 866, to an inquiry as to what should be done to some who had been baptized by a person of Jewish nationality, of whom it was uncertain whether he were a Christian or not, directed that they must not be rebaptized.⁴ John VIII. (872–882) says that baptism is freely conceded to the faithful laity in necessity, and that a father may baptize his own child without incurring matrimonial separation.⁵ Urban II. (1088–1099) extended the permission to women.⁶

Some comparatively little known theologians of the first half of the twelfth century threw in their teaching on the same side. From the writings of Ivo, Bishop of Chartres (d. 1115), and Alger, a monk of Cluni (d. 1131), it may be gathered that Augustine, Gelasius, Isidore, Nicholas, and others, had become standard authorities for quotation in favour of the validity of baptism by

⁴ A quodam Judæo, nescitis utrum christiano an pagano, multos in patria vestra baptizatos asseritis, et quid de his sit agendum, consulti- tis. Hi profecto si in nomine sanctæ Trinitatis, vel tantum in nomine Christi baptizati sunt. . . . constat eos non esse denuo baptizandos.—Nichol. I. *Respons. ad Consulta Bulgarorum*, Ep. xviii. 104. See also 15, 16.

⁵ Nam baptizandi hoc opus

etiam laicis fidelibus, juxta canonicam sanctionem, si necesse fuerit, facere libere conceditur.—Joan. VIII. *Ad Anselmum Episc. Lemo- vicens.* Ep. cccxxvi.

⁶ Super quibus consultit nos tua dilectio, hoc videtur nobis ex sententia respondendum: ut et baptismus sit, si instante necessitate femina puerum in nomine Trinitatis baptizaverit.—Urban. II. *Ad Vitalem*, Ep. cclxxi.

irregular ministrants.⁷ Rupert, abbot of Deutz (d. 1135), says that heretical baptism is not to be repeated if conferred in the Name of the Trinity.⁸ Honorius of Autun (cir. 1150) says a faithful layman may baptize in necessity, and the priest is not to rebaptize the child if it recovers.⁹ Hugo of St. Victor, however, speaks of the validity of baptism by women as still questioned, though he considered himself that everyone had power to baptize.¹

In about 1153, Gratian, a Benedictine monk, brought out the *Decretum*, the first instalment of the *Corpus Juris Canonici*, which is the great guide to canon law abroad. Here, digesting the teaching of the Western Church up to his day and ignoring that of the Eastern, he quotes the earlier popes and others, especially St. Augustine. The result is, therefore, a decision that, though a priest only is the ordinary minister of baptism, yet the laity may baptize in urgency; and the sacrament is valid not only at the hands of the faithful, but also if the baptizer is a heretic or a pagan.² The importance of the

⁷ Ivo, *Decret.* i. lxii., lxiv.—lxvii.; *Panormia*, i. xxii.—xxix. Divus Algerus, *Can. et Scholast. Leodiensis, De Sacramento*, iii. vi.; *De Misericordia et Justitia*, i. lii., lv.

⁸ Rup. Tuitiensis, *De Trin. et Oper. Ejus, In Lev.* ii. xxv.

⁹ Si presbyter, vel quilibet de clero non adest, a fidei laico in nomine Trinitatis in simplici aqua baptizetur. Si supervixerit a sacerdote catechizetur, oleo ungetur, chrismetur, non denuo baptizetur, sed ab episcopo confirmetur.—Honor. Augustodunensis, *Gemma Animæ*, iii. cxvi.

¹ De his qui a mulieribus baptizantur, queritur utrum rebaptizari debeant? Quidam dicunt quod

rebaptizandi sint. . . . Juxta auctoritates prædictas indubitanter dicimus quod per quemcunque detur baptismus si ibi servata forma fuerit sacramenti, id est in nomine sanctæ Trinitatis traditur, non sunt rebaptizandi, quia sacramentum baptismatis habent, rem vero sacramenti non habent si errori eorum consentiunt.—Hugo de S. Victor, *Summa Sententiarum*, v. viii.

² The following titles of chapters indicate the line of Gratian's evidence.—19. Non nisi sacerdos baptizare præsumat. 20. Non præsumat mulier baptizare. 21. Etiam laici necessitate cogente baptizare possunt. 23. Non reiteratur baptismus, quod a pagano ministratur. 25. Sicut per

Decretum is immense, because it became the unfailing authority of the succeeding times.

So fully was the validity of lay baptism accepted at this period that St. Bernard, in discussing the value of baptism by a laic in the Name of God and the holy cross, does not so much as hint at any possibility of its invalidity on the score of the ministry; and this, not because the failure to name the Blessed Trinity settled the question independently, for strangely enough he regarded the imperfect form as sufficient.³

Baudinus, who was apparently either the master or the pupil of Peter Lombard, at some period of the twelfth century, says that only priests may baptize, unless in necessity, when deacons or any others may do so, if they observe the proper form.⁴ Lombard says exactly the same, speaking of Cyprian's view as erroneous.⁵ But, as to mimic baptism, he adds, after quoting St. Augustine's doubt, that it has seemed to wise men that it would not be valid, because it lacks the real intention requisite in baptizing.⁶ At this time the

bonum, ita per malum ministrum æque baptisma ministratur. 28. Non reiteratur baptisma, quod in nomine sanctæ Trinitatis ministratur. 31. Anapprobetur baptisma, quod a non baptizato præstatur. 32. Non reiteratur baptisma, quod in fide Trinitatis ab hæreticis præstatur. 36. Valet baptisma, etsi per laicos ministretur. 45. Extra ecclesiam baptismus accipi potest, sed non prodest. See *Decretum*, III. *De Consecr.* iv. 19-52. Comp. II. causa i. qu. (1), 34-75.

³ Raptum ex utero puerum ob periculum mortis laicus quidam, ut dicitis, baptizavit, communem verborum formam non tenens, sed

dicens, Baptizo te in nomine Dei, et sanctæ et veræ crucis. Quæritis, utrumnam baptizatus sit puer; an magis, si vivit, baptizandus? Ego vere hunc baptizatum puto; nec sonum vocis veritati fidei et pietati intentionis præjudicare potuisse.—Bern. *Ad Henric. Archidiac.* Ep. cccciii.

⁴ Magister Baudinus, *Sent.* iv. vi., vii.

⁵ Quicumque sit qui baptizet, si servatur forma a Christo tradita, verum baptismum dat; et ideo qui illum sumit non debet rebaptizari.—Lomb. *Sent.* iv. vi. 1.

⁶ Videatur tamen sapientibus non fuisse baptismum, ut cum aliqui

necessity of intention in conferring sacraments began to assume a more prominent place than in earlier theology, and it recurs as an indispensable factor of baptism in most of the authorities of subsequent date.

St. Raymond of Peñafort, the canonist to whom Gregory IX. entrusted the preparation of the second great collection of canon law, known as the Decretals of Gregory, gives exact and interesting testimony on the liberal acceptance of lay baptism. In danger of death, he says, 'a child may be baptized by anyone, even by a lay man or woman, whether catholic and faithful, or Jew, pagan and unfaithful, and also by excommunicates, heretics or schismatics, if only they observe the right form, and intend to do what the Church intends and does, for otherwise it is no baptism.' If there is a choice of persons, one in minor orders is to be preferred to a layman, a man to a woman, one of the faithful to the unfaithful, because he who baptizes does so as the representative of Christ, and Christ is better represented by the greater than the less. The father or mother, however, ought only to baptize in the greatest necessity. Baptism conferred by an uncommissioned minister, he is careful to point out, is not given 'by virtue of office and authority,' and is only to be resorted to when there is danger of death. Since this danger is common in childbirth, midwives and nurses should be exactly instructed in the baptismal formula. No one, he says, can baptize himself (a decision also found in Gregory's Decretals, from Innocent III.,⁷ and commonly repeated after), on the ground that there is an inherent necessity for a distinction between the persons of the baptizer

in balneum vel in flumen merguntur
in nomine Trinitatis, non est tamen
baptismus, quia non intentione

baptizandi illud geritur. — Lomb.
Sent. iv. vi. 5.

⁷ Inter baptizantem et baptiza-

and the baptized. The growing fancy of the age of the schoolmen for speculative questions is illustrated by the addition of a serious discussion as to whether angels, or the devil appearing in human form, could baptize. He thinks angels might, but not the devil.⁸

Hostiensis, in the latter half of the thirteenth century, similarly goes the whole length of allowing the validity of baptism by heretics, heathen and excommunicates, in case of necessity.⁹

tum debeat esse discretio . . . alius est, qui baptizatur, et alius, qui baptizat. Ad quod etiam designandum ipse Christus non a seipso, sed a Joanne voluit baptizari.—Inn. III. *Ad Meton. Episc.* See *Corpus Juris Canonici, Decret. Greg.* III. tit. xlii. 4.

⁸ Si timetur de periculo, ut quia mors videtur propinqua, tunc talis puer potest a quocunque baptizari, etiam a laico vel a muliere, seu sint catholici et fideles, seu judei vel pagani et infideles, et etiam excommunicati, hæretici, schismatici; dummodo servent debitam formam . . . et intendant illud facere quod intendit seu facit ecclesia: aliter non est baptismus. . . . Si necessitas immineat et vergat puer ad mortem, dignioris personæ erit ipsum baptizare; ut, puta, presentibus presbytero et clerico, clericus non baptizabit, sed presbyter. Similiter laico et muliere presentibus solius laici erit baptizare. Et si clericus et laicus sunt presentes, imminenti tali necessitate, clericus baptizabit et non laicus. In tali etiam necessitate preferetur fidelis infideli. Et contra faciens peccaret. Et ratio istorum est quia ille qui baptizat in presentia Christi bap-

tizat, et representat ejus personam, quæ perfectius representatur per fidelem quam infidelem, per virum quam per mulierem, per promotum quam non promotum, per tonsuratum quam per non tonsuratum. . . . Ipse judeus potest baptizare, quia eodem modo valet baptismus collatus per malum sicut per bonum. Baptismus enim non est ministri conferentis sed Christi . . . et hoc est verum si ipse intendit facere hoc quod ecclesia intendit, et cum hoc proferat debitam formam verborum, et immergat puerum, et hoc tempore necessitatis. Tamen judeus non potest baptizare ex officio et auctoritate, ut probat argumentum. Et textus iste qui dat facilitatem baptizandi judeo vel infideli intelligitur de articulo mortis, et non quoad auctoritatem vel officium. . . . Obstetrices seu mulieres, quas dicunt sagaces, quæ parturientium curam gerunt et quæ ex officio suo habent pueros ex matris uteris suscipere, debent esse bene instructæ circa formam baptismi, et illam perfecte scire, ut possint necessitate occurrente baptizare.—Raym. *Summula*, I. xv.—xviii.

⁹ Certe ne dum sacerdos vel diaconus, sed et hæreticus et

St. Thomas Aquinas, at the same time, examines separately the case of a priest, a deacon, a Christian layman, a woman, an unbaptized person, a Jew, and a pagan, and in every instance decides for the validity of the rite, if only it is accurately performed with the Church's intention. His argument is that baptism is a sacrament of necessity, and therefore the qualification of the administrator is not an essential condition of its validity. As any water is sufficient, so also is any person, although one who is not ordained sins if he confers it without urgent cause. The reasoning brings him to the somewhat eccentric illustration of two unbaptized people baptizing one another: he holds that such a baptism would be valid.¹

Scotus, equally with Aquinas and the other schoolmen, lays down that baptism is valid whoever be its minister.²

paganus et excommunicatus, dum tamen in forma ecclesiæ rite conferatur. . . . Necessitate etiam instante, quilibet et quælibet potest baptizare.—Host. *Summa*, III. xliii. 3, *Quis possit vel debeat baptizare*.

¹ Aquin. *Summa*, I. lxvii. 1-5. Inter omnia autem sacramenta, maximæ necessitatis est baptismus, qui est regeneratio hominis in vitam spiritualem. . . . Et ideo, ut homo circa remedium tam necessarium defectum pati non possit, institutum est ut et materia baptismi sit communis, scilicet aqua, quæ a quolibet de facili haberi potest; et minister baptismi etiam sit quicumque non ordinatus, ne, propter defectum baptismi, homo salutis suæ dispendium patiat.—3. 'In Christo non est masculus et femina.' Et ideo, sicut masculus laicus potest

baptizare quasi minister Christi, ita etiam et femina. Quia tamen 'caput mulieris est vir, et caput viri est Christus,' non debet mulier baptizare, si adsit copia viri.—4. Per ecclesiam determinatum est quod non baptizati, sive sint judæi, sive pagani, possunt sacramentum baptismi conferre, dummodo in forma ecclesiæ baptizent. . . . Et hujus ratio est, quia, sicut ex parte materiæ, quantum ad necessitatem sacramenti, sufficit quæcumque aqua, ita etiam sufficit ex parte ministri quicumque homo. . . . Si vero extra articulum necessitatis hoc fieret, uterque graviter peccaret, scilicet baptizans et baptizatus; et per hoc impediretur baptismi effectus, licet non tolleretur ipsum sacramentum.—5.

² Duns Scotus, *Sent.* IV. VI. 1.

De Burgo does the same, in the fourteenth century, expressing himself in the most explicit language. ‘In extreme necessity,’ he says, ‘any man whatever, cleric or lay, baptized or unbaptized, heretic or infidel, Jew or pagan, or in any way infamous, can baptize. And baptism conferred by such is valid, if only he has a general or special intention of baptizing, and observes the form delivered by the Church; because not the merit of the ministers, but the virtue of Christ, operates in baptism. Nor is such a one to be rebaptized by another who is a catholic.’ He adds the usual cautions that a baptized person is to be preferred for the office to an unbaptized, a man to a woman, and so forth, the father and mother being a last resort, unless some impediment, such as ignorance of the words to be said, makes it advisable not to keep to the order of precedence. No room for exception was left; only that a dumb person was excluded because he could not say the essential form.³

One other testimony must be added, that of the great English canonist William Lyndwood, whose *Provinciale* was published between 1430 and 1440.

³ Item. In ardua necessitate, quilibet homo, sive clericus, sive laicus; baptizatus, sive non baptizatus; hæreticus, sive infidelis; judæus, sive paganus; seu quidamcumque flagitiosus potest baptizare. Et valet baptismus a tali collatus; dummodo habeat intentionem baptizandi generalem vel specialem, et ærvet formam traditam ab ecclesia; quia non merita ministrorum, sed virtus Christi in baptismate operatur. . . . Item, pater et mater, absque præjudicio copulæ conjugalis, possunt in extremæ necessitatis

articulo proprios filios in forma ecclesiæ baptizare. Si tamen alii adsint qui baptizare possint, non debet pater vel mater proprium filium baptizare. Item, mulieri quamvis doctæ et sanctæ, sicut in conventu, docere non licet, ita nec aliquem nisi urgente necessitatis articulo baptizare. . . . Mutus non potest aliquem baptizare. Quod ideo est, quia de essentia baptismi est certa forma verborum; quam mutus proferre non potest.—Burgo, *Pap. Oculi*, II. ii.

His contribution to the subject is contained in the scattered notes of that book, in which he borrows much from the *Corpus Juris Canonici*, and from the schoolmen and canonists who preceded him, whose authority he constantly quotes. The sum of his evidence is this: 'Except in necessity, a priest is the only lawful minister of baptism.' But in necessity anyone may baptize, a pagan, a heretic, a schismatic, a layman, whether faithful or unfaithful, even the father of the child, or a woman. Among circumstances of necessity he includes, besides severe illness, any grave peril, such as war, an incursion of robbers, or a flood. 'One who is not a priest sins mortally if he baptizes, except in danger of death; yet, if anyone who is not a priest has, as a matter of fact, baptized without circumstances of necessity, but with the right intention, and in the Church's form, the baptism holds in effect so far as that the person thus baptized ought not to be rebaptized. And,' he continues, 'I say the same about one who baptizes, being himself unbaptized; for the goodness or sanctity of the minister does not belong to what is necessary, but to what is suitable, to baptism. Whence also, if the baptizer does not believe in the sacrament of baptism, nor that any spiritual thing is done thereby, the baptism is valid, if only he generally intends to do what the Church does.' Thus, the English canonist was abreast of his fellows, in the extent to which he allowed the validity of baptism by irregular ministers.⁴

⁴ Lynd. *Provinciale*, I. vii., x.; III. xxiv. Oxf. ed., 1679, pp. 41, 42, 50, 241-4. Extra casum necessitatis, solus sacerdos est debitus minister ad sacramentum baptismi. Et peccaret mortaliter aliquis non sacer-

dos baptizans, præterquam in articulo mortis. Si tamen de facto baptizaret aliquis non sacerdos extra articulum necessitatis, cum tamen debita intentione, et in forma ecclesiæ, tenet baptismus ad effec-

In turning from the schoolmen and canonists to the acts of councils, it is noticeable that the Church's writers seem throughout to be somewhat in advance of the formal decrees of her synods. While the earlier of the mediæval theologians were teaching the fullest doctrine of the validity of lay baptism, the councils were still for the most part silent. Indeed, where the ministry of baptism is dealt with, during the first part of this period, though there is no denial of lay baptism, for it is not mentioned, the tendency of the canons is to be restrictive, with the view of securing that baptism should be confined as far as possible to solemn administration at stated times. When Gratian brought out his *Decretum*, he had to rest his case for the validity of baptism by laymen, heretics, and pagans almost entirely on the isolated opinions of a few fathers and the popes. The current practice of the Western Church may have been in accord with them, but it had not been embodied in conciliar decrees.

tum quod sic baptizatus non debet rebaptizari. Et idem dico de non baptizato baptizante: quia bonitas sive sanctitas ministri non est de necessitate baptismi, sed de congruentia. Unde et si baptizans non credit sacramentum baptismi, nec aliquid ibi fieri spirituale, dummodo in genere intendat facere quod facit ecclesia, valet baptismus.—p. 41. In quo casu [necessitatis] non solum laicus christianus, sed etiam paganus baptizare potest.—p. 50. Quia forsitan timetur de ejus morte imminente, quo casu cuilibet licet baptizare, etiam patri. Unde et hæreticus tempore necessitatis potest baptizare, dum tamen cum intentione baptizandi servet formam ecclesiæ.

Et non solum potest esse necessitas in periculo mortis, sed etiam quia in partibus est hostilitas, vel incursus latronum, aut inundatio aquarum, vel quid simile in via vel in loco, vel damnum pecuniarium; ut si sub pœna pecuniaria esset prohibitum, ne quis ad talem locum accederet. . . . Licet presbyter baptizare possit, præsentem episcopum, quia de officio suo est; tamen præsentem presbytero clericus baptizare non debet, nec laicus præsentem clerico, nec mulier præsentem viro.—p. 241. Etiam hæreticis vel schismaticis, fidelibus et infidelibus, dummodo habeant intentionem baptizandi, et servent formam ecclesiæ.—p. 244.

Whether it was due to the publication of the *Decretum*, or to some other cause, a sudden change seems to have come over the tone of the councils immediately after, for the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries produced an abundance of canons, directly sanctioning lay baptism in necessity. The statutes nearly always take the same form. The priest is the proper minister; but, in urgency, laity may baptize, men in preference to women, and any rather than the parents. Then, in addition, as time progresses, there come injunctions to instruct midwives, and congregations in general, in the right form, that everyone may be prepared to baptize if emergency arises. All such lay baptism is valid; and, if the child recovers, the priest is not to baptize it again. The councils, as a rule, confined themselves to what was likely to be practically required, and avoided the more speculative cases of irregular baptism, to which the theological taste of the day was attracted in ecclesiastical treatises.

Omitting the English councils for the present, many instances of decrees of this kind can be found abroad. As early as the twelfth century they occur in the Constitutions of Odo, Archbishop of Paris, and in the canons of two councils of uncertain locality. Then, in rapid succession, they find a place in the statutes of councils at Treves in 1227, at Rouen in 1235, at Fritzlar in Hesse in 1246, at Le Mans in 1247, at Valencia in 1255, at Arles in 1260, at Mayence in 1261, at Claremont in 1268, at Treves again in 1277, at Cologne in 1280, at Nismes, with some particularity, in 1284, and at Liège in 1287. A French synod of Cahors, Rodez and Tulle in 1289 adds, what is unusual in the canons, that baptism is valid if conferred by an excommunicated

person, a heretic or a pagan, in the form of the Church, with the Church's general intention. Three councils in Cyprus—two undated, and one in 1298—a council at Wurzburg in the same year, and a council at Bayeux in about 1300, are to be added to the list of the thirteenth century. Then, for another half century, canons of the same kind were passed at Mayence in 1310, at Ravenna in 1311 and again in 1314, at Prague in 1346 and 1355, and, after an interval, at Rheims in 1408, and at Salzburg in 1420.⁵

John of Ragusa, at the council of Basle, in 1433, while defending communion in one kind, illustrated his contention that the Church has power to regulate such matters, by instancing lay baptism. To the apostles alone, he says, our Lord gave the commission, 'Go, baptize:' 'and yet, in a circumstance of necessity, men and women, pagans, Jews and heretics can baptize, so long as they observe the form, matter and intention of the Church. Why is this? Certainly because the Church has so declared and so ordained, and because it has so pleased her that her authority shall be communicated to all in circumstances of necessity.'⁶ He thus treats the wide acceptance of any minister of baptism as an acknowledged doctrine of the Church, though one evolved entirely by her own discipline. When

⁵ See Note at end of chapter.

⁶ Porro nec ex doctrina Christi et evangelii, nec etiam ex doctrina alicujus apostolorum habetur expresse, quod aliquis habeat potestatem baptizandi, exceptis ecclesiasticis, quorum statum præfigurabant apostoli, quibus solis dictum est, Ite, baptizantes, etc.; et nihilominus in necessitatis articulo mares et fœminæ, pagani, judæi et hæretici

possunt baptizare, dummodo servant formam, materiam et intentionem ecclesiæ: unde hoc? certe quia sic declaravit ecclesia, sic ordinavit, et quia sic ei placuit suam auctoritatem omnibus communicare in necessitatis articulo.—*Oratio Joannis de Ragusio, De communione sub utraque specie*: Conc. Basil. Mansi, vol. xxix. p. 859.

Bossuet, at a later date, adopted the same line of argument on the same subject, he doubtless borrowed it from John of Ragusa's oration.⁷

The fullest form of the belief was authoritatively pronounced in the decrees of Pope Eugenius at the council of Florence, in 1439: 'The minister of this sacrament is a priest, to whom it belongs to baptize from his office. But in a case of necessity, not only a priest, or a deacon, but also a lay man or woman, or even, indeed, a pagan and heretic, can baptize, if only he observes the form of the Church, and intends to do what the Church does.'⁸ Yet even here there is, as in nearly all the decrees, a reticence about lay baptism when there is no excuse of necessity, and a careful emphasis on the need of an intention to act on behalf of the Church. The validity of lay baptism under other circumstances is probably implied, but the deliberate and express sanction to which councils were committed was confined to the limited range of cases where urgency left only the choice of a lay administration or no administration at all. As Walafrid Strabo sums it up at the end of the fifteenth century, 'Where inevitable necessity demands, it is better to be baptized anywhere and by anybody than to run the risk of perishing without the remedy.'⁹

In England, the question of lay baptism was as abundantly treated in the later middle ages as it was on the continent, and in very much the same way.

⁷ Bossuet, *La Communion sous une espèce*. See *ante*, p. 26.

⁸ See Note at end of chapter.

⁹ Ubi inevitabilis necessitas poscit, melius baptizari ubicumque

et a quocumque in nomine Trinitatis, quam periclitantem sine remedio deperire.—Walaf. Strabo, *De Rebus Ecclesiasticis*, xxvi.

Lanfranc, writing to Donatus, an Irish bishop, in 1073, tells him that ‘the canons lay down that an infant may be baptized by a faithful layman, if imminent death urges, and if a priest is lacking.’¹ Whether Lanfranc would have extended the power to others than to ‘faithful’ laymen, that is, communicant churchmen, can only be matter of conjecture. What he does say shows that lay baptism was received in his day under the form least open to criticism.

The same causes, whatever they were, that led to the frequent discussion of lay baptism in the councils abroad, operated equally in England, and at exactly the same period, for similar canons abound during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

A council at Westminster, under Archbishop Walter, in 1200, says, ‘If a child is baptized by a layman, which may be done by the father or by the mother, without prejudice to matrimony, let what follows, not what precedes, the immersion be completed by the priest.’ The Constitutions of Bishop Poore of Salisbury in 1217, and the identical canons of a council at Durham in 1220, say that what precedes as well as what succeeds the immersion is to be performed by the priest. In either case the object was to prevent the repetition of the actual baptism itself. At Oxford, in 1222, a council directs ‘priests frequently to teach the laity that they ought to baptize children in necessity, even women, and the father and mother of the child in the greatest necessity.’ So does a Scotch council at Aberdeen in 1225. Archbishop Edmund’s Constitutions

¹ Infantem quoque non baptizatum, si morte imminente urgeatur, a fidei laico, si presbyter desit,

baptizari posse, canones precipiunt. —Lanf. *Ad Don. Hib. Episc.*

in 1236 direct lay baptism in necessity, and so also does a council at Coventry in 1237, and another of uncertain place at about the same date. The Legatine Constitutions of Otho, formally accepted by a council in St. Paul's Cathedral in 1237, decree 'that parish priests, diligently learning the form of baptism, shall explain it frequently to their parishioners, on the Lord's day, in the vulgar tongue; that, if a case of necessity occurs, in which it behoves them to baptize anyone, they may know it and be able to observe it.' Similar directions providing for lay baptism were given by councils at Worcester in 1240, at St. Andrew's in 1242, at Chichester in 1246, at Durham in 1255, and at Norwich in 1257. The Legatine Constitutions of Othobon, received by a council in St. Paul's in 1268, repeat those of Otho, and impress their teaching, saying that, 'since none ought to die without receiving this sacrament, it can be conferred by anyone in case of necessity; and, when it is administered in the form of the Church, it avails to salvation.' Every archdeacon is enjoined, therefore, to make strict inquiry throughout his archdeaconry, as to whether the form is frequently taught to the people; and he is to punish severely such priests as neglect to teach it.

Archbishop Peckham's Constitutions, in 1279, urge the early baptism of children, without waiting for Easter and Pentecost, especially on the ground of the danger of sudden death, when the parents, through ignorance, may easily make a mistake in the baptismal formula. But, the decree proceeds, 'if, perchance, it has happened that children have been baptized by lay persons, on account of the danger of death, let priests take care that they dare not repeat a baptism lawfully performed.' Some evidently were inclined to resist the doctrine of

lay baptism, and to rebaptize, for the Archbishop's Constitutions at Lambeth, in 1281, severely reprobate the practice. 'We find that some have transgressed concerning the sacrament of baptism. For, whereas, if children are in danger, on account of inevitable necessity, it is conceded to any laymen or to women, in such cases, thus to baptize those who are in danger, and baptism of this kind is sufficient for salvation, if the due form has been observed, nor ought those who are thus baptized to be baptized again; yet since some foolish priests rebaptize children so baptized, not without indignity to the sacrament, we strictly forbid that this be done any more.' A considerable council at Exeter, in 1287, enacted similar directions in some detail. Since 'the sacrament of baptism is so necessary that without it there is no salvation,' 'it often happens that a child has to be baptized by some other than a priest, on account of the danger of death.' Therefore 'it is expedient and needful that everyone should understand and know the form of baptizing, that, when inevitable necessity occurs, he may be able to observe it. If it is not exactly observed, the child must be baptized afresh; since, of the two things necessary to baptism, that is, the words and the matter, if either is imperfect, nothing at all is done.' But if these are complete the priest may only supply what follows the immersion. A council at Winchester, in 1308, gives the same direction, in nearly the same words.²

Exactly conformable to the ruling of the canons was the rubrical direction of the Sarum Manual. It orders parish priests often to teach the baptismal formula, on Sundays, that people may know how to baptize in

² See Note at end of chapter.

emergency. 'And if the child have been baptized according to that form, let everyone take heed that he baptize him not again; but if such infants recover, let them be brought to the Church, and let the exorcisms and questions be said for them, with unction and all the other rites, except immersion and the baptismal formula, which are altogether to be omitted.' A conditional form is supplied, but only for use when there is a doubt as to whether the words had been accurately said in the private baptism.³

The practice in England under this rule may be illustrated by a curious work, entitled *Instructions for*

³ Notandum est quod quilibet sacerdos parochialis debet parochianis suis formam baptizandi in aqua pura, naturali, et recenti, et non in alio liquore, frequenter in diebus dominicis exponere, ut si necessitas emergat sciant parvulos in forma ecclesiæ baptizare, proferendo formam verborum baptismi in lingua materna, distincte et aperte et solum unica voce, nullo modo iterando verba illa rite semel prolata, vel similia super eundem: sed sine aliqua additione, subtractione, interruptione, verbi pro verbo positione, mutatione, corruptione, seu transpositione, sic dicendo: I christene the N. in the name of the Fadir, and of the Sone, and of the Holy Gost. Amen: Vel in lingua latina, sic: Ego baptizo te N. in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen: aquam super parvulum spargendo, vel in aquam mergendo ter vel saltem semel. Et si puer fuerit baptizatus secundum illam formam, caveat sibi unusquisque ne iterum eundem

baptizet: sed si hujusmodi parvuli convalescant, deferantur ad ecclesiam et dicantur super eos exorcismi et catechismi, cum unctionibus et omnibus aliis supradictis præter immersionem et formam baptismi, quæ omnino sunt omittenda. . . . Et ideo si laicus baptizaverit puerum, antequam deferatur ad ecclesiam, interroget sacerdos diligenter quid dixerit, et quid fecerit: et si inveni-erit laicum discrete et debito modo baptizasse, et formam verborum baptismi ut supra in suo idiomate integre protulisse, approbet factum, et non rebaptizet eum. . . . Non licet laico vel mulieri aliquem baptizare, nisi in articulo necessitatis. Si vero vir et mulier adessent ubi immineret necessitatis articulus baptizandi puerum, et non esset alius minister ad hoc magis idoneus præsens, vir baptizet et non mulier, nisi forte mulier bene sciret verba sacramentalia et non vir, vel aliud impedimentum subesset.—*Manual. Saris. Rit. Baptizandi.*

Parish Priests, translated into rhyme by John Mirk, a monk of a branch house of the canons regular of St. Austin, and canon of Lilleshall in Shropshire. Mirk lived in the fifteenth century, but the directions which he versified are evidently much older, and therefore are proof of the use in England both in his own day and in earlier times. The instructions as to private baptism are very copious, and are practical applications of the canonical statutes.

To folowe ⁴ the chylde 3ef hit be nede
 3ef heo se hyt be in drede ;
 And teche the mydewyf neuer the latere
 That heo have redy clene watere,
 Thenne bydde hyre spare for no schame,
 To folowe the chylde there at hame.

But folowe thow not the chylde twye
 Lest afterwarde hyt do the nuye.
 Teche hem alle to be war and snel
 That they conne say the wordes wel.

And if the cas be-falle so,
 That men and wymmen be fer hyre fro,
 Then may the fader wythout blame
 Crysten the chylde and geve hyt name ;
 So may the moder in suche a drede
 3ef scho se that hyr be nede.

If the child recovers it is to be brought to Church, where the priest is to inquire carefully whether the due form has been observed, and if there is any doubt he is to baptize conditionally. What is especially interesting, because it is a point untouched by the canons, is the discussion of presumptuous lay baptism, where there is no necessity, either in seriousness or in jest :

⁴ Baptize.

But what and on in hys bordes ⁵
 Is the chylde i-folowed or no ?
 By God I say nay for hem bo
 But if 3ef hyt were hys fulle entent
 To geve the chylde that sacrament,
 Thenne mote hyt stande wythout nay,
 And he perfore rewe hyt may.⁶

The English canons and rubrics, like those abroad, strictly confined explicit permission of lay baptism to cases where no priest could be obtained and danger of death was imminent. Closing, apparently, at an earlier period than the foreign injunctions, they are free from the more speculative questions entertained later, and do not seem to touch the subject of baptism given without necessity, or by heathen and the unbaptized, by Jew or by infidel. The English Church was actually committed to the validity of nothing more than it positively sanctioned. But current opinion read the conciliar decrees as covering a greater area than was involved in the strictness of their wording. This is shown, not only by such a decision as that of Mirk, when he treats unnecessary lay baptism with a right intention as valid, but still more by Lyndwood's notes on the canons of Archbishops Rich and Peckham, which he illustrates freely from the advanced teaching of schoolmen and theologians. In doing so, he may have been quite loyal to the spirit of those who enacted the statutes, but a real distinction must be drawn between the way in which the Church was bound by the common theory, and by the more limited doctrine which had the positive authority of councils. Nevertheless it is true generally

⁵ Sport.

by E. Peacock, *Early English Text Society*, 1868, pp. 3, 4, 18.

⁶ *Instructions for Parish Priests*,
 by John Mirk, ed. from Cotton MS.

to say that Western Christendom, at the end of the middle ages, held all baptism to be valid, if it was administered with the right matter, right words, and a right intention.

The only point to be considered, then, is how far the mediæval Western teaching is to be taken as a guide to catholic practice. As one reads canon after canon repeating it with almost monotonous uniformity (and the number of canons might probably be largely multiplied), its weight seems almost overwhelming. But there are some things which modify its force as of universal application. The testimony of the councils and theologians of this period is not really independently cumulative. The decrees are couched in language so nearly, and often so exactly, identical, that it is clear they were copied from one another. The same may be said, in a lesser degree, of the works of the schoolmen and canonists. It was one voice, rather than a number of voices, which spoke through the many channels provided by the age of conciliar and scholastic theology. This voice was practically the voice of Rome. Ever since the time of Stephen, the Roman discipline had run in the direction of a very large acceptance of irregular baptism. The theology of the middle ages supported it by its inclination to adopt the extremest view of the impossibility of salvation for the unbaptized, without any qualification as to the opportunity for receiving the rite. So widely was the permission of lay baptism repeated that it would be absurd for anyone to try to depreciate its force. For Western Christendom it was, for the time, conclusive. The baptisms administered under this rule were, according to all principles of Church order, undoubtedly sufficient. Only it was not a law which bound

the whole Church, or any part of it for always. It originated in no general council, nor had been accepted by such. It had not the sanction of the East, in its entirety, either then or ever. It was the mind of one part of a divided Christendom for the needs of its age, not necessarily the final mind of the whole Church for the use of all times.

NOTE TO CHAPTER VIII.

MEDIÆVAL CANONS ON BAPTISM BY DEACONS AND LAITY.

1. *Odonis Episcopi Parisiensis Synodica Constitutiones.* Cent. XII.

In Romano sub eadem forma doceant frequenter sacerdotes, laicos baptizare debere pueros in necessitate. Si invenerit laicum discrete et modo debito baptizasse, et formam verborum in Romano integre protulisse, approbet factum.—Cap. iii. 4.

2. *Concilium incerti loci.* Circa Cent. XII.

Si vero instante mortis periculo puer baptizatur a laico, quod fieri potest in necessitate a patre vel a matre absque matrimonii præjudicio, sequentia immersionem per sacerdotem impleantur.—32.

3. *Concilium incerti loci.* Circa Cent. XII.

In Romano sub hac eadem forma doceant frequenter laicos debere baptizare pueros in necessitate, etiam mulieres, patrem et matrem pueri in summa necessitate.—1.

4. *Concilium Eboracense ab Huberto, Archiepiscopo Cantuar., celebratum, 1195.*

Decevimus etiam, ut non nisi summa et gravi urgente necessitate diaconus baptizet.—5.

5. *Concilium Londinense, ab Huberto, Cantuar. Archiep., celebratum Westmonasterii, 1200.*

Non liceat diaconibus baptizare, vel pœnitentias dare, nisi duplici necessitate; viz., quia sacerdos non potest, vel absens, vel stulte non vult, et mors imminet puero vel ægro. Si vero in necessitate puer baptizetur a laico, quod fieri potest a patre vel a matre, absque matrimonii præjudicio, sequentia immersionem non præcedentia per sacerdotem expleantur.—3.

6. *Constitutiones Richardi Poore, Sarum Episcopi.* Circa 1217.

De baptisate et pœnitentia, præcipimus quod diaconi pœnitentias dare vel baptizare non præsumant, nisi in his casibus, cum sacerdos non potest, vel absens est, vel indiscrete non vult, et mors imminet puero vel ægroto. Si vero puer baptizatur a laico, præcedentia et subsequentia in mersione expleantur a sacerdote.—19.

7. *Concilium Dunelmense ab Richardo de Marisco, Dunelm. Episc.* 1220.
[Identical with 6.]8. *Concilium Oxoniense per Stephanum Cantuariensem.* 1222.

Doceant frequenter laicos baptizare debere pueros in necessitate, et mulieres, patrem et matrem pueri in summa necessitate, discrete et modo debito baptizasse. . . . Item, si in necessitate puer baptizetur a laico, sequentia immersionem, non præcedentia, per sacerdotem expleantur. . . . Nullus diaconus aut inferior clericus baptizet aut pœnitentias injungat; sed soli sacerdotes, quibus id competit ex officio, nisi summa necessitate, puta, quoniam sacerdos absens est, aut nullus etiam præsens, et non potest, aut stulte non vult, et mors imminet puero aut ægroto, aut de ea juste timetur.—*De Bapt.*

9. *Statuta Synodalia Diœcesis Aberdonensis.* Circa 1225.

In Romano vero et etiam Anglico idiomate sub eadem forma doceant sacerdotes frequenter laicos et posse et debere baptizare pueros in necessitate. Et pater et mater baptizent filium suum in necessitate cum alii desint personæ, et sine prejudicio matrimonii.—55.

10. *Concilium Trevirensis Provinciale.* 1227.

Baptismus cum reverentia et honore celebretur in aqua communi sub hac forma: Ego te baptizo in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti; et laici doceantur a sacerdotibus suis sic baptizare, etiam mulieres, ut sciant in articulo necessitatis. Et distincte proferantur, id est cum quadam magna discretione, omnia verba in baptismo maxime prædicta, in quibus tota vis sacramenti consistit. Et Gallici sacerdotes in Romano doceant laicos, quomodo debeant baptizare parvos pueros suos in necessitate; etiam pater et mater dicendo cum intentione baptizandi: Je te baptô en nomine Patre, et do Fis, et do Sainte Esperit. Theutonici vero dicunt: Ich duffen dich, in deme Neme des Vaders, tride des Sonnes, tride des Neiligen Geistes. Et semper interroget sacerdos laicum cum in necessitate baptizavit, quid dixerit? aut quæ fecerit? aut quæ egerit? et si invenerit cum discretione baptizasse, et formam verborum observasse, et intentionem baptizandi habuisse, approbet factum, et faciat sibi deferre puerum, et non baptizet eum, sed chrismate inungat eum, et dicat illa verba quæ dici solent.—1.

11. *Præcepta Antiqua Diœccesis Rotomagensis.* 1235.

In Romano sub hac forma laicos doceant sacerdotes frequenter, debere baptizare pueros patrem et matrem pueri, in summa necessitate.—4.

12. *Constitutiones Provinciales S. Edmundi Cantuar. Archiep.*
Circa 1236.

Si vero puer a laico domi propter necessitatem fuerit baptizatus, &c.—10. Semper interroget sacerdos laicum diligenter, cum in necessitate baptizaverit puerum, quid dixerit; etiam quid fecerit: et si diligenti præcedente inquisitione, facta sibi fide plena invenerit laicum distincte et in forma ecclesiastica baptizasse, sive in Latino, sive Gallico, sive in Anglico, approbet factum.—11. De baptizate et pœnitentia præcipimus, quod diaconi pœnitentias dare et baptizare non præsumant, nisi in iis casibus, cum sacerdos non potest, vel absens est, vel stulte vel indiscrete non vult, et mors imminet puero vel ægroto. Si puer baptizatus fuerit a laico, præcedentia et subsequencia immersionem compleantur a sacerdote.—12.

13. *Constitutiones Alexandri Coventerencis Episc.* 1237.

Item, præcipimus, quod quilibet sacerdos doceat parochianos suos baptizare pueros suos in necessitate, secundum formam ecclesiæ super his verbis, Ego baptizo te, &c.

14. *Constitutiones Othonis Cardinalis.* Circa 1237.

Statuimus insuper, ut parochiales presbyteri formam baptismi diligenter addiscentes, cum parochianis suis frequenter exponant diebus dominicis in vulgari; ut si articulus necessitatis emergat, quo ipsos oporteat aliquem baptizare, cum sciant et valeant observare, quæ forma utrum servata fuerit, postmodum diligenter inquirent.—*De Bapt.*

15. *Constitutiones Synodales episcopi anonymi, regnante Henr. III.*

Doceant frequenter sacerdotes laicos baptizare debere pueros in necessitate; patrem etiam et matrem pueri sine præjudicio matrimonii, in summa necessitate. . . . Item si in necessitate puer baptizatur a laico, sequentia immersione, non præcedentia, per sacerdotem expleantur. . . . Nullus quoque diaconus, vel inferior clericus baptizet, vel pueros inungat; sed soli sacerdotes, quibus illud competit ex officio, nisi in summa necessitate, sicut quando sacerdos absens est, vel etiam præsens et non possit interesse, vel stulte non vult, et imminet mors puero vel ægroto.

16. *Constitutiones Walteri de Cantilupo, Wigorniensis Episc.* 1240.

Præcipimus sacerdotibus, quibus cura parochialis incumbit . . . doceantque subditos suos formam verborum, qua baptizare debeant parvulos suos, si forte necessitas emergerit baptizandi, ut eos baptizent sub his verbis in lingua qua noverint baptizare.—*De Bapt.*

17. *Statuta Synodalia Diœces. S. Andreae. 1242.*

Diaconi baptizare et pœnitentiam dare non possunt, nec eucharistiam ministrare pœsumant. In mortis periculo diaconus etiam et laicus poterunt baptizare. De hiis parochiani in ecclesiis debent edoceri, et quomodo sit baptizandus sub hiis verbis, Ego baptizo te in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti. Amen. . . . Addicimus etiam si de baptismo alicujus dubitatur, modis omnibus baptizetur, quia non potest dici iteratum quod nescitur fuisse collatum, super hiis verbis, Si baptizatus es, non te baptizo, sed si non baptizatus es, ego te baptizo in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti. Amen.

18. *Concilium Provinciale Fritzlariae, a Sigfrido III., Moguntino Archiep. 1246.*

Sacerdotes etiam doceant tam mares, quam fœminas, in necessitate parvulos baptizare eadem forma in suo idiomate, et quod patres, et matres, infantes proprios, si summa necessitas exigat, poterunt baptizare, et si sacerdotes, super hoc diligentius inquirentes, debitam formam servatam in baptismo invenerint, quod factum est, approbent; supplentes circa baptizatum quod unctionem olei in pectore, et in scapulis, et chrismate in vertice, quod a laicis est omissum.—1.

19. *Statuta Synodalia Richardi Cicestrensis Episc. 1246.*

Hanc doceant sacerdotes laicos, et patrem et matrem, ut integre proferant illam in sua lingua, vel in Latina, et baptizent pueros, si necessitas exigat et non aliter. Si autem puer a laico baptizetur, inquiret sacerdos, quid laicus dixerit, et quid fecerit. Et si invenerit distincte, et in forma ecclesie puerum esse baptizatum, etiam in aqua, quæ de necessitate requiritur, et hoc immergendo vel aspergendo, cætera sine immersione a sacerdote suppleantur.

20. *Statuta Synodalia Ecclesie Cenomanensis. 1247.*

In Romano sub hac forma doceant presbyteri frequenter laicos debere pueros baptizare, etiam patrem et matrem pueri in summa necessitate. Laici tamen puero non imponant nomen. . . . Interrogetur autem laicus, qui puerum baptizavit, diligenter a sacerdote, quid dixerit, quid fecerit; et si invenerit eum modo debito baptizasse, allato puero ad ecclesie fores, nomen ei imponatur, et suppleatur quod deest.—*De Bapt.*

21. *Constitutiones Synodales Valentinae Diœcesis. 1255.*

Et presbyteri moneant laicos quod in necessitate, cum timeatur de morte puerorum, possint pueros baptizare, Petre, vel Antoni, Ego te baptizo in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti. Amen. Hoc idem possunt facere pater, et mater, cum de vita pueri dubitatur. Et si vixerit puer taliter baptizatus, ad ecclesiam deportetur, et ibi catechumenetur et chrismetur, sed non rebaptizetur, quia suppleri debet caute quod ex necessitate fuerit prætermisum.

22. *Constitutiones Walteri de Kirkham, Episc. Dunelmensis.*
Circa 1255.

Solemnibus diebus et dominicis doceant fideles laicos ipsam in communi idiomate et vulgari, ut, cum necessitas ingruerit, sciant laici, qualiter baptizandi sint parvuli in domibus eorum, non expectato ecclesie sacerdote.

23. *Statuta Synodalia Walteri et Simonis, Norwicensium Episc.*
Circa 1257.

Sacerdotes . . . formamque baptizandi doceant frequenter laicos in idiomate communi.

24. *Concilium Arelatense.* 1260.

Statuimus, ut presbyteri parochiales in præcipuis festivitibus in plena ecclesia, et publica populi allocutione et sermone, doceant parochianos suos, qualiter et quibus verbis debeant uti, dum parvulos in casu necessitatis taliter baptizant.—2.

25. *Concilium Provinciale Moguntinum.* 1261.

Doceant sacerdotes tam mares, quam fœminas in necessitate debere parvulos baptizare, eadem forma in suo idiomate, et quod patres et matres proprios infantes, si summa necessitas exigat, poterunt baptizare; et si sacerdotes, super hoc requirentes diligentius, debitam formam in baptis- mate servatam invenerint, quod factum est, approbent.—4.

26. *Statuta Synodalia Claromontensis Ecclesie.* 1268.

Et in Romana lingua sub hac forma doceant presbyteri laicos frequenter, debere pucros baptizare; supple, in necessitate. Laici tamen, quando baptizant in necessitate, nomen puero non imponant, forma tamen verborum præterea, ab eo qui baptizat, integre, ordinate, et sine nominis transpositione, et sine interpositione aliqua proferatur. Interrogetur autem laicus, qui puerum in necessitate baptizavit, diligenter a sacerdote, quid dixit, quid fecit. Et si invenerit, cum discreto modo et debito baptizasse, oblato puero ad ecclesie fores nomen imponatur, eidem suppleatur quod deest.—4.

27. *Constitutiones Dom. Othoboni legati promulgata in concilio generali Londini.* 1268.

Cum autem nemo prorsus debeat absque hujusmodi sacramenti perceptione dimitti, potest a quocunque necessitatis casu occurrente conferri, et collatum in forma ecclesie proficit ad salutem. Quia vero multorum simplicitas in baptismi collatione deficeret, cum necessitatis articulus immineret, nisi a ministris Christiane fidei docerentur, a prædicto legato

invenimus provide constitutum, ut parochiales presbyteri formam baptismi firmiter addiscentes, eam parochianis suis frequenter exponant diebus dominicis in vulgari; ut si articulus necessitatis emergat, in quo oporteat per ipsos aliquem baptizari, eam sciant et valeant observare. Nos igitur quod in hujusmodi statuto de presbyteris parochialibus est expressum, ad perpetuos ecclesiarum vicarios extendimus, et ab his præcipimus observari. Et quia præter certum salutis periculum hoc non potest negligi nec omitti, adjiciendo statuimus, et in virtute sanctæ obedientiæ districte præcipimus, ut quilibet archidiaconus per suum archidiaconatum, contra presbyteros et vicarios ipsos inquisitionem faciat diligentem, quos hoc salutare statutum invenerit non observare, graviter (prout rei qualitas exegerit) puniendo.—i. *De Bapt.*

28. *Trevirense Concilium.* 1277.

Et laici doceantur a sacerdotibus suis sic baptizare, etiam mulieres, ut sciant in articulo necessitatis, et distincte proferantur, id est cum quadam magna discretione, omnia verba in baptismo, maxime prædicta, in quibus tota vis sacramenti consistit, &c.—1.

29. *Concilium Provinciale Redingense, a Joanne Peckham, Cantuar. Archiep.* 1279.

Alii autem, qui aliis temporibus nati extiterint, tum propter mortale periculum, quod sæpe pueris imminet improvisum, tum propter simplicitatem parentum, qui contra formam baptismi sint faciliter erraturi, absque offensionis nota, juxta vetustam consuetudinem, vel incontinenti cum fuerint nati, vel postea, prout placuerit ipsis parentibus, baptizentur. Quod si forte contigerit, pueros propter mortis periculum a laicis baptizari, caveant sacerdotes ne baptismum legitime factum audeant iterare.—4.

30. *Synodus Coloniensis.* 1280.

Item, sacerdos eandem formam doceat mares et fœminas observare, cum in necessitate baptizant infantes, etiam parentes, si alii defuerint.—4.

31. *Constitutiones Provincialis Concilii Lambethensis.* 1281.

Circa sacrum baptismum quosdam reperimus deliquisse. Cum enim periclitantibus parvulis, pro necessitatis inevitabilis articulo, quibuscumque laicis vel mulieribus sit concessum in casibus hujusmodi periclitantes taliter baptizare, et hujusmodi baptismum ad salutem constet sufficere, si forma debita observetur; nec debere baptizatos taliter iterum baptizari: quidam tamen stolidi sacerdotes, sic baptizatos parvulos, non sine sacramenti injuria rebaptizant. Quod ne de cætero fiat firmiter inhibemus: sed super sic baptizatos exorcismi et catechismi propter reverentiam ecclesie facientes.—3.

32. *Synodus Nemausensis.* 1284.

Præcipimus itaque, ut infans quam cito natus fuerit, si periculum mortis sibi immineat, ita quod presbytero nequeat presentari, a circumstantibus masculis, si præsentibus fuerint, baptizetur. . . . Vel si masculi præsentibus non fuerint, a circumstantibus feminis baptizetur, etiam a patre, vel a matre, si alii non fuerint a quibus valeat baptizari. Sed quamdiu fuerint, a patre, vel a matre nullatenus baptizetur. . . . Ne vero propter imperitiam laicorum, infans absque forma debita baptizetur, districtè præcipimus, ut frequenter admoneant, et instruant plebem suam, ut cum ex necessitate prædicta aliquem baptizari contigerit, hanc formam in traditione ipsius baptismi cum diligentia studeant observare. . . . Si quis autem se ipsum baptizaverit, talem non esse baptizatum ecclesia iudicabit, eo quod formam baptizandi non servavit a Domino traditam, qui dixit, Baptizate omnes gentes in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti. . . . Hæc omnia supra dicta, si quando a laicis baptizetur, præcipimus in necessitatis articulo observanda: sed necessitate cessante, omnibus laicis, et etiam clericis, nisi fuerint in presbyteros canonice ordinati, catechismum faciendi, baptizandi, atque in dominicis diebus exorcizandi, et mortuos sepeliendi, interdicimus potestatem. Sustinentes quod diaconi et subdiaconi possint prædicta facere ubi sacerdos non est præsens, vel ea facere non potest, et necessitatis articulus noscitur imminere. . . . Ad hæc si sacerdos invenerit, infantem a laicis juxta formam ecclesiæ baptizatum, ita quod non sit de hoc aliquatenus dubitandum, non rebaptizet.—*De Bapt.*

33. *Synodus Exoniensis.* 1287.

Baptismi sacramentum adeo est necessarium, quod sine eo non est salus, nec aliis quam baptizatis regni cœlestis janua aperitur. Quapropter sacerdotibus, quibus cura animarum incumbit, districtè præcipimus, quod formam baptizandi parochianis suis exponant sæpius in vulgari: videlicet, quod tempore partus aquam habeant promptam, in quam, si oportuerit, baptizandum immergant, dicentes, Ego baptizo te in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti. Sæpius enim accidit, quod propter mortis periculum, per alium quam per sacerdotem oportebit parvulum baptizari. Propter causas hujusmodi emergentes, expedit et oportet ut quilibet formam baptizandi intelligat et sciat: quam, cum inevitabilis casus emergerit, valeat eam observare, quæ si penitus observata non fuerit, parvulus de integro baptizetur. Quoniam ex quo duo sunt necessaria in baptismo; scilicet verbum et elementum, utroque vel altero deficiente, nihil est quod agitur. Sacerdos insuper suos instruat parochianos, quod non solum sacerdotes, verum etiam clerici et laici, insuper pater et mater, in necessitatis articulo, absque copula conjugali, suos parvulos valeant baptizare. Cum igitur contigerit parvulum domi propter mortis periculum baptizari, si postea convalescerit, ad ecclesiam deferatur; ut, si rite fuerit baptizatus, non ipsa submersio, nec ipsa præcedentia, sed subsequencia duntaxat per sacerdotem, ut convenit, suppleantur.—2.

34. *Statuta Synodalia Johannis Episc. Leodiensis.* 1287.

Item, doceant presbyteri frequenter viros et mulieres formam et verba baptizandi in propria lingua, quibus valeant in necessitate baptizare, etiam parentes, si alius defuerit, et postmodum referatur ad sacerdotem, qui diligenter interroget quid baptizator fecerit, aut quid dixerit, et si inveniatur omnia rite facta vel dicta, faciat puero ea quæ solent fieri post immersionem.—ii. *De Bapt.* 4.

35. *Synodalia Statuta Cadurcensis, Ruthenensis, et Tutelensis Ecclesiarum.* 1289.

Baptizare autem potest et debet episcopus, vel sacerdos, vel diaconus si sacerdos commode haberi non potest, et in necessitate quicumque: immo etiam tenet hoc sacramentum si conferatur ab excommunicato, hæretico, vel pagano, in forma ecclesiæ, licet conferri a talibus non debeat. . . . Tria vero sunt necessaria in baptismo, scilicet, intentio baptizantis, vel ecclesiæ generalis, item elementum . . . item verba . . . Præcipimus itaque ut infans quam cito natus fuerit, si periculum mortis sibi imminet, ita quod presbytero nequeat presentari, a circumstantibus masculis, si presentes fuerint, baptizetur. . . . Si autem masculi presentes non fuerint, a circumstantibus fœminis baptizetur, etiam a patre vel matre, si alii non fuerint, a quibus valeat baptizari, sed quamdiu alii fuerint, a patre vel a matre nullatenus baptizetur.—vi. *De Sacr. Bapt.*

36. *Synodus Diœcesana Herbipolensis.* 1298.

Laicus qui necessitate puerum baptizavit, diligenter interrogetur a sacerdote, quid dixerit, et quid fecerit; et si sacerdos eum invenerit discreto modo et debito baptizasse, allato puero ad fores ecclesiæ, suppleatur quod deest.—2.

37. *Constitutiones Ecclesiæ Nicosiensis.* Cent. XIII.

Doceantur præterea laici, ut cum necessitas occurrerit, vir vel mulier, qui præsens fuerit, præponat nomen puero, et dicat, Ego te baptizo, &c.—17.

38. *Constitutio instruens Græcos et alios.* (*Synodicum Nicosiense.*) Cent. XIII.

Instruant itaque sacerdotes vel alios, dum in necessitate baptizant, servare in baptismo verborum formam, a Jesu Christo et sanctis patribus institutam.—4.

39. *Concilium Nimociense.* 1298.

Et licet a solis sacerdotibus infantes debeant baptizari: tamen cum mortis vel infirmitatis maxima necessitas ingruerit, alii clerici et laici, nisi adsint presbyteri, et etiam pater et mater, si alie persone defuerint, parvulis exhibeant sacramenta, ter mergentes in aqua, et non in alio liquore, dicentes prædictam formam.—1.

40. *Synodus Bajocensis.* Circa 1300.

In Romano doceant laicos sacerdotes sub hac forma debere frequenter pueros, etiam patrem et matrem pueri, in summa necessitate, baptizare, et dicant laicis, quod nomen puero non imponant.—4.

41. *Constitutiones Synodales per Henricum Woodlake, Winton. Episc., editæ.* Circa 1308.

Circa sacramentum baptismi, quod est omnium sacramentorum janua, sine qua ab ecclesia ad regnum cœlorum minime pervenitur, sacerdotibus, quibus annuarum cura committitur, districte injungimus, ut frequenter in lingua vulgari parochianis suis formam baptizandi exponant, quæ talis est: N., ego baptizo te in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti. Amen: ut, si necessitas inevitabilis emergerit, quod quandoque per alium, quam per sacerdotem loci oporteat baptizari, ipsam formam sciat necessarius baptizator hujusmodi observare; quæ si observata fuerit, per sacerdotem loci ab hiis, qui intererant, inquiri præcipimus diligenter; ut, si eam omisam, vel non observatam invenerit, puerum ex toto, secundum ecclesiæ formam traditam baptizaret. Puer autem domi forma, qua præmisimus, baptizatus, si forte convaleat, ad ecclesiam deferatur, ut per sacerdotem, omisam immersione et præcedentibus ipsam immersionem, sequentia suppleantur. . . . Doceant insuper parochianos suos presbyteri memorati, quod non solum sacerdos, verum etiam clerici et laici quicumque, insuper pater et mater, absque copulæ maritalis præjudicio, possint in inevitabili casu hujusmodi parvulos baptizare. Et, ne casus hujusmodi quemquam surripiat improvisum, præcipimus, quod tempore, quo mulier laborat in partu, aqua semper habeatur ad manus, ut, si ingruerit necessitas, puer in forma quam præmisimus baptizetur.—*De Bapt.*

42. *Concilium Moguntinum.* 1310.

Doceant etiam sacerdotes, tum mares quam fœminas, in necessitate debere parvulos baptizare eadem forma in suo idiomate, et quod patres et matres proprios infantes, si summa necessitas exigat, poterunt baptizare. Et si sacerdotes super hoc diligentius requirentes debitam formam in baptismo observatam invenerint, quod factum est approbent.

43. *Concilium Ravennate II.* 1311.

Cum sacramentum baptismi omnium sacramentorum sit principium, et fundamentum, et ideo propter summam necessitatem forma ejusdem, a Christo institutore tradita, a nullo fidelium maxime debeat ignorari . . . et ne de ipsius ignorantia quis valeat excusari, ter in anno, scilicet, [in octava Epiphaniæ Domini,] in die Resurrectionis, et in die Pentecostes, per episcopos, per se vel alios in ecclesiis cathedralibus, per archipresbyteros in baptismalibus, et per rectores in parochialibus, in missarum solemnibus vel prædicationibus, publice et districte præcipimus divulgari.—11.

44. *Concilium Ravennate III.* 1314.

Quia damnabile est, iis præsertim ad quos spectat ex officii debito baptizare, formam sacramenti baptismatis ignorare, atque aliis periculosum: propterea, ut ipsius baptismi substantialia verba nota sint, ipsa in præsentî concilio duximus exprimenda. . . . Et ne quis ea possit deinceps ignorare, mandamus quod quilibet rector, seu sacerdos, suum populum debeat et teneatur ter saltem in anno instruere in prædictis, videlicet, in octava Epiphaniæ Domini, in sabbato sancto Paschæ, et in sabbato Pentecostes.—14.

45. *Concilium Pragense.* Circa 1346.

Hanc autem formam frequenter plebani doceant plebes suas. Nam propter necessitatem istius sacramenti, sine quo nullus potest salvari, etiam laicus quicumque, vir, vel mulier, pater, vel mater, puerum vel adultum baptizare poterunt in suo vulgari proferentes formam verborum in mortis articulo constitutum. Et cum in tali necessitate per huiusmodi personas quis fuerit baptizatus, presbyter a baptizato et personis circumstantibus diligenter inquirat, si forma debita sit servata, quam si servatam invenerit, circa baptismum unctiones tantum supplere debitas non omittat.—*De Bapt.*

46. *Synodus Pragensis Provincialis.* 1355.

[Identical with No. 45.]

47. *Remense Concilium.* 1408.

Item, si obstetrices sciunt unam formam baptizandi in parochia sua; et super hanc paterentur obstetrices interrogari, et doceri, quod hæc est forma, spargendo aquam super puero; *Enfant je te baptise au nom du Père, et du Fils, et du Saint Esprit. Amen.*

48. *Concilium Saltzburgense.* 1420.

Doceant igitur sacerdotes, tam mares quam feminas, in necessitate debere parvulos baptizare eadem forma in suo idiomate; et quod patres et matres proprios infantes, si summa necessitas exigat, poterunt baptizare.—28.

49. *Synodus Florentina.* 1439.

Minister hujus sacerdos, cui ex officio competit baptizare. In causa autem necessitatis non solum sacerdos vel diaconus, sed etiam laicus vel mulier, imo etiam paganus et hæreticus baptizare potest, dummodo formam servet ecclesiæ, et facere intendat quod facit ecclesiæ.—*Decretum Eugenii Papæ Quarti ad Armenos.*

CHAPTER IX.

THE REFORMATION.—CENT. XVI.

Foreign Reformers: Zuinglius, Calvin—Council of Trent—English Reformers—First English Prayer Books—Unreformed practice in Queen Mary's reign—Unreformed practice in Scotland—Scotch Presbyterians—French Protestants—English practice in Queen Elizabeth's reign—Baptism by midwives—Correspondence of English Reformers and foreign Protestants—Proceedings in Convocation—Literary controversies: Cartwright, Whitgift, Hooker, &c.

THE first check to the tide of acceptance of lay baptism in the West came from the protestant reformers of the sixteenth century. Their views are of little intrinsic value, except on account of the influence they had on the minds of some of the English divines.

The movement began abroad. Zuinglius himself held the mediæval opinion. He speaks of it as an error in some that 'they think baptism can be conferred by no other than a priest alone; when, indeed, any man can do it, and women also, whenever necessity seems so to require.'¹ But his followers were disposed to modify this view. The Helvetic Confession of 1536 says, 'We teach that baptism ought not to be administered in the Church by women, or by midwives; for Paul removes women from ecclesiastical offices.'² This

¹ Zvingl. *De Bapt.* ii.

² Docemus baptismum in ecclesia non administrari debere a mulierculis, vel ab obstetricibus. Paulus

enim removit muliereculas ab officiis ecclesiasticis. — Conf. Helv. 1536, cap. xx.

can scarcely refer only to public baptism, because of the mention of midwives. Bullinger, upon whom the mantle of Zuinglius fell, as preacher at Zurich, distinctly understood that women were forbidden to baptize under any circumstances whatsoever. Both in his sermons and in his English correspondence he states an opposition to all lay baptism, not only as his own opinion, but also as that of the religious body of which he was a member.³

Calvin also was opposed to lay baptism. In his *Institutes* he says it appears to him impossible to defend the custom by any good reason, though he admits that it 'has been received and practised for many ages past, and almost from the primitive times of the Church.' He relies simply on the argument from Scripture. 'Christ,' he says, 'never commanded women, or men in general, to baptize; He gave this charge to those whom He had appointed to be apostles. . . . It is far more consistent with piety to show this reverence to the institution of God, not to receive the sacraments from any other hands than those to which the Lord hath committed them. When it is impossible to receive them from the Church, the grace of God is not so attached to them, but that we may obtain it by faith from the word of the Lord.' His previous argument, that the unworthiness of the minister does not affect the validity of sacraments, is sometimes quoted as showing that he would have allowed the validity of lay baptism; but erroneously, through a want of attention to the whole of the chapter.⁴

³ Bullinger, *Decades*, Parker Soc. vol. v. p. 370; *Zurich Letters*, vol. ii. p. 357.

⁴ Calvin, *Institutes*, iv. xv. 16, 20-22.

The reforming tendency to repudiate irregular baptism no doubt was the primary cause of its emphatic endorsement by the council of Trent, in 1547. The canon passed there runs: ‘If any shall say that baptism, even that which is given by heretics in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, with the intention of doing what the Church does, is not true baptism, let him be anathema.’⁵

The Catechism of the Council of Trent, put out a little later, discusses the whole question of the minister of baptism in a very temperate and rational spirit, summing up the teaching of the middle ages accurately and without any exaggeration, and giving the reasons on which it is based. It lays down that the command to baptize was given to the apostles, and in them to bishops and priests, who can alone execute it in their own ordinary right. Lest bishops should be taken away from the weightier care of teaching, they had been wont to leave the ministry of baptism to priests, who, having the right to baptize by virtue of their orders, might do so even in the presence of a bishop. Any early restriction in this respect was only to be understood of solemn baptism on certain special days. On the other hand, deacons, according to most of the fathers, can only baptize by the command of the bishop, or the consent of a priest. Since, however, baptism is necessary for all, the goodness of God has extended the permission to others also, when necessity makes it impossible to obtain the regular ceremonial ministrations.

⁵ Si quis dixerit, Baptismum, qui etiam datur ab hæreticis in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti, cum intentione faciendi quod

facit ecclesia, non esse verum baptismum; anathema sit.— Conc. Trident. Sess. vii. *De Bapt.* iv.

Under such circumstances it is valid, if the intention has been to do what the Church does, when performed by any—men, women, Jews, infidels or heretics. But an order of precedence ought to be observed among the persons; a cleric should be preferred to a layman, a man to a woman; and therefore the catechism says that if a man is present, he is more suitable for the office than a midwife, supposing he is equally acquainted with the manner of baptizing. This was the instruction which Rome put into the hands of her parish priests.⁶

⁶ *Catechismus ad Parochos*, II. II. *De Bapt. Sac.*—23. *Quod hominum genera baptismum administrare possint.* Jam vero a quibus ministris hoc sacramentum conficiatur, non utiliter modo, sed necessario tradendum videtur; tum ut ii, quibus præcipue hoc munus commissum est, illud sancte et religiose curare studeant: tum ut ne quis, tanquam fines suos egressus, in alienam possessionem intempestive ingrediatur, vel superbe irrumpat; cum in omnibus ordinem servandum esse apostolus admoneat. Doceantur igitur fideles, triplicem esse eorum ordinem: ac in primo quidem episcopos, et sacerdotes collocandos esse, quibus datum est, ut jure suo, non extraordinaria aliqua potestate, hoc munus exercent. Iis enim in apostolis præceptum est a Domino, *Euntes baptizate.* Quamvis episcopi, ne graviores illam docendi populi curam deserere cogerentur, baptismi ministerium sacerdotibus relinquere soliti essent. Quod vero sacerdotes jure suo hanc functionem exercent, ita ut præsentem etiam episcopo ministrare baptismum possint, ex

doctrina patrum, et usu ecclesiæ constat. Nam, cum ad eucharistiam consecrandam instituti sint, quæ est pacis et unitatis sacramentum, consentaneum fuit, potestatem iis dari omnia illa administrandi, per quæ necessario hujus pacis et unitatis quilibet particeps fieri posset. Quod si aliquando patres sacerdotibus, sine episcopi venia, baptizandi jus permissum non esse dixerunt, id de eo baptismo, qui certis anni diebus solemniter cæremonia administrari consueverat, intelligendum videtur. Secundum ministrorum locum obtinent diaconi, quibus sine episcopi aut sacerdotis concessu non licere hoc sacramentum administrare, plurima sanctorum patrum decreta testantur.—24. *Qui sacramentum baptismi in casu necessitatis conferre possint.* Extremus ordo illorum est, qui cogente necessitate sine solemnibus cæremoniis baptizare possunt; quo in numero sunt omnes etiam de populo, sive mares, sive fœminæ, quæcumque illi sectam profiteantur. Nam et Judæis quoque, et infidelibus, et hæreticis, cum necessitas cogit, hoc munus permissum est; si tamen id efficere

In England very mixed influences were at work. There were of course those whose sympathies were with the old order, men who held high views of the sacraments and the priesthood, to whom the validity of lay baptism was an inherited doctrine to be accepted out of loyalty to the Church. There were others who were with them in permitting lay baptism, from very different motives. In the shock of the Reformation some lost their faith in the Church and her ordinances, or at least were able to express openly the want of faith which they would not have ventured to express in times of sterner rigidity. Such could allow lay baptism simply because they did not believe that baptism possessed any sacramental value. Tyndale, the protestant martyr, and translator of the New Testament, was a specimen of these in the early days of the Reformation. He was willing to go the length not only of permitting women

propositum eis fuerit, quod ecclesia catholica in eo administrationis genere efficit. Hæc autem cum multa veterum patrum et conciliorum decreta confirmarunt, tum vero a sacra Tridentina synodo anathema in eos sancitum est, qui dicere audeant, baptismum, qui etiam datur ab hæreticis in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti, cum intentione faciendi quod facit ecclesia, non esse verum baptismum. In quo profecto summam Domini nostri bonitatem et sapientiam licet admirari. Nam cum hoc sacramentum necessario ab omnibus percipiendum sit, quemadmodum aquam ejus materiam instituit, qua nihil magis commune esse potest, sic etiam neminem ab ejus administratione excludi voluit. Quamvis ut dictum est, non omnibus liceat

solempnes cæremonias adhibere, non quidem quod ritus aut cæremoniæ plus dignitatis, sed quod minus necessitatis, quam sacramentum habeant.—25. *Quis ordo in baptizando a fidelibus servandus sit.* Neque vero hoc munus ita omnibus promiscue permissum esse fideles arbitrentur, quin ordinem aliquem ministrorum statuere maxime deceat. Mulier enim, si mares adsint, laicus item præsentem clericum, tum clericus coram sacerdote, baptismi administrationem sibi sumere non debent. Quamquam obstetrices, quæ baptizare consueverunt, improbandæ non sunt, si interdum præsentem aliquo viro, qui hujus sacramenti conficiendi minime peritus sit, quod alias viri magis proprium officium videretur, ipsæ exequantur.

to baptize, but equally to minister the Body and Blood of Christ, in necessity, where no priest could be had.⁷

On the other hand, the majority of the puritans, swayed by Calvinistic influence, objected strongly to baptism by laymen, and even to private baptism by the clergy, under any circumstances whatever. This they did, not out of respect to the office of the priesthood, but because the provision for the administration of baptism by anyone, rather than that the person should die altogether unbaptized, implied a reality of sacramental grace in the ceremony which they were unwilling to grant. Moreover, the permission to laymen rested professedly on Church tradition, and the puritan theory rejected tradition entirely, and refused to go for authority outside the pages of Holy Scripture. Hence, the very people who depreciated the sacraments were those who at this time were driven to take what might appear to be the highest line, because they so could best minimise sacramental truths.

Thus, as early as 1536, the puritan clergy in Convocation were complaining, with characteristic misrepresentation, that it was said ‘that priests have no more authority to minister sacraments than the laymen have’: and ‘that it is as lawful to christen a child in a tub of water at home, or in a ditch by the way, as in a font-stone in the church.’⁸ ‘Cranmer’s Catechism,’ a translation from the German issued with his authority, after directing that baptism by the clergy is to be esteemed as done by Christ Himself, im-

⁷ Tyndale, *Answer to Sir Thomas More’s Dialogue*, Parker Soc., pp. 18, 29, 98. *Lower House of Convocation*, 3, 17; Fuller, *Church History*, v. iii. 28.

⁸ *Protestation of Clergy of the*

mediately gives a warning against unordained preachers, with whom 'Christ is not present.' Yet, in another treatise of about the same date, attributed in the main to Cranmer, the validity of baptism by women is allowed.⁹ Hooper, on the other hand, said that when a midwife, 'for danger of the child's soul will christen it, it is a profanation of the sacrament, and not to be suffered.'¹

Amidst these conflicting opinions, the first English Prayer Book was drawn up, and published in 1549. Its baptismal rubrics were intended to check any abuse of lay baptism, without going the length of repudiating it. The office entitled, 'Of them that be baptized in private houses in time of necessity,' was founded partly on the Sarum Ritual and partly on Hermann's Consultation, both of which provided for baptism by others than the clergy in cases of urgency. One of the preliminary rubrics, instructing 'pastors and curates' as to the admonishing of their people upon baptism, says, 'They shall warn them, that without great cause and necessity, they baptize not children at home in their houses. And when great need shall compel them so to do, that then they minister it on this fashion. First, let them that be present call upon God for his grace, and say the Lord's prayer, if the time will suffer. And then one of them shall name the child, and dip him in the water, or pour water upon him, saying these words: N. I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. And let them

⁹ Cranmer's *Catechism*, 1548, 'Of the keys'; ed. 1829, p. 197: latin, p. 168. *Confutation of Unwritten Verities*, x., Parker Soc. *Misc. Writings*, p. 58. It is uncertain

how far this essay is entirely by Cranmer's own hand.

¹ Hooper, *Answer to Bishop of Winchester's Book*, 1547, Parker Soc. *Early Writings*, p. 131.

not doubt, but that the child so baptized is lawfully and sufficiently baptized, and ought not to be baptized again in the Church.' Then follow directions as to the questions to be asked by the priest when the child is brought to Church, in order that he may ascertain whether it was properly baptized. 'And if the minister shall prove by the answers of such as brought the child, that all things were done, as they ought to be: then shall not he christen the child again, but shall receive him, as one of the flock of the true christian people, saying thus: I certify you, that in this case ye have done well, and according unto due order concerning the baptizing of this child,' &c.

Even the extremely puritan Prayer Book of Edward VI., in 1552, made no alteration in the wording of these parts of the office, and it stood in exactly the same form in Elizabeth's Prayer Book, in 1559.

There can be no doubt that the compilers of the English office were personally averse to lay baptism in a greater degree than appears in the book itself. We know this on unquestionable authority. Bishop Cooper, writing of some discussions which took place on lay baptism, in the Convocation of 1575, says, concerning baptism by midwives, 'In the Convocation, the matter was debated amongst us, wherein some of those persons were present, to whom the drawing of the book was permitted, who protested that neither the order of the book did allow any such thing, neither that it was any part of their meaning to approve the same. But for so much as baptizing by women hath been aforetime commonly used, and now also of rashness by some is done, the book only taketh order and provideth, that if the child be baptized by the midwife, rebaptizing be

not permitted.’² Archbishop Hutton also said: ‘I heard divers reverend fathers (who were learned preachers in King Edward’s days, and very privy to the doings in the Convocation, and themselves dealers, in anno primo Elizabethæ) affirm plainly, that there was no meaning to allow that midwives or women should baptize, no more than to minister the supper of the Lord to the sick in private houses. But would not lay it down in plain words, lest it might hinder the passage in the parliament; tantæ molis erat Romanum tollere ritum.’³ Hampered thus by the circumstances in which they found themselves, the compilers only endeavoured ostensibly to limit the use of lay baptism as strictly as possible to unavoidable exigencies. Possibly, too, they tried to bring out the sacerdotal character of the ministry, as much as they could, in the wording of the service; but the only very noticeable example of this is the phrase, ‘by our office and ministry,’ a stronger expression than the original upon which it is founded.⁴

Probably, therefore, scarce any active check was put upon lay baptism by the publication of the English Prayer Book, or for some time after. During the return to unreformed practice in Queen Mary’s reign, of course the Roman usage was pressed again in its mediæval form. Thus, in the visitation articles of Bishop Bonner, in 1554, one runs thus: ‘Item, whether any priest, or ecclesiastical person have reiterated or renewed baptism,

² Quoted in Keble’s *Works of Hooker*, vol. ii. p. 283 note, from *M. Some laid out in his colours*, p. 66. See *post*, pp. 189, 190.

³ Hutton to Whitgift, Oct. 9, 1603; Cardwell, *Conferences*, pp.

157, 175.

⁴ Spiritum adoptionis emitte; ut quod nostræ humilitatis gerendum est ministerio, virtutis tuæ impleatur effectus.—*Rituale; Benedictio Fontis Baptismi.*

which was lawfully done before; or invented or followed any new fashion or form, contrary to the order of the catholic Church?’ When it is remembered that the puritan faction were disallowing lay baptism, there can scarcely be a doubt that this inquiry was levelled against their views. Another question in these articles is: ‘Item, whether that every priest having cure, do admonish the women that are with child within his cure, . . . to have water in readiness to christen the child, if necessity so require it?’ This also must be understood as contemplating baptism by the lay attendants. Bale, the puritan, attacked these articles as giving license to baptism by the laity.⁵

Shortly after, in 1556, Cardinal Pole reiterated the full Roman theory of lay baptism, in a formal decree, which repeated verbatim the canon of Florence.⁶ Pole’s articles of inquiry as to the clergy, in 1557, also ask: ‘Item, whether they be diligent in teaching the midwives how to christen children in time of necessity, according to the canons of the Church, or no?’⁷

The Reformation affected the Church in Scotland later than in England, and all this time the old usage was going on there, undisturbed even by the slight modifications of the first English Prayer Books. A catechism set forth in 1551, by John Hamilton, Archbishop of St. Andrew’s, with the approval of the bishops of a provincial council, says: ‘Certainly baptyme may be gevin be thame quhilk ar out with the kirk as ar all

⁵ Bonner’s *Articles of Visitation*, 33, 35; Cardwell, *Documentary Annals*, vol. i. pp. 133, 134. Bale, *Declaration*, p. 71.

⁶ *Reformatio Angliæ, ex decreto*

Reginaldi Poli cardinalis, 2; Wilkins, *Concilia*, vol. iv. p. 795. See *ante*, p. 170, No. 49.

⁷ Cardwell, *Doc. Ann.* vol. i.

171.

heretikis scismatykis.’ And further on: ‘Quhensaevir the tyme of neide chancis that the barne can nocht be brocht conveniently to a preist and the barne be feirit to be in peril of dede, than all men and women may be ministeris of baptyme, swa that quhen thai lay wattir upon the barne with that thai pronounce the wordis of baptyme intendand to minister that sacrament as the kirk intendis.’⁸

The Reformation had not yet touched the Scotch Church discipline, but it had disturbed men’s minds, and many great irregularities were growing up. Spottiswoode tells of a protestant layman, Adam Wallace by name, who was brought up for ecclesiastical trial at Edinburgh in 1550, among other things for baptizing his own child, without any plea of necessity. In defence he maintained ‘that it was as lawful for him to baptize his own child, since he could not have a true minister, as it was to Abraham to circumcise Ishmael and his family.’⁹ Some went further in erratic innovation, for a certain band of reforming preachers not only freely baptized, without having true orders, but also used a form of such doubtful validity that a provincial synod in Edinburgh, in 1559, decreed that those whom they had baptized must receive conditional baptism from the Church. Persons were prohibited, under pain of excommunication, from suffering their children to be baptized by any other than priests, except under circumstances of necessity.¹

⁸ *Catechisme set forth be Johne Archbishop of Sanct Androus*, 1551, Law’s ed. pp. 172, 193.

⁹ Spottiswoode, *History of Church of Scotland*, ed. 1851, vol. i. p. 178.

¹ Quoniam Paulus Methwen,

Wilhelmus Harlaw, Johannes Grant, Johannes Willecocks, Johannes Patritz, et alii complures catholicae fidei et ecclesiasticae unitatis desertores, non solum pestifera haereseos dogmata disseminarunt, sed et inusitatum, et

This was on the very eve of the accomplishment of the Scotch Reformation. In the disastrous period which followed, the Church injunction had little effect in checking the ministrations of baptism by Presbyterian preachers. These followed the Calvinistic teaching; and, although themselves without episcopal orders, they were strong against allowing baptism by any except the so-called ‘ministry.’ Above all they rejected the mediæval practice of baptism by midwives. The Book of Common Order, generally known as Knox’s Liturgy, published in 1564, directed ‘that forasmuch as it is not permitted by God’s word, that women should preach or minister the sacraments . . . the infant that is to be baptized shall be brought to the Church.’²

nusquam ab ecclesia catholica hactenus receptum baptizandi modum induxerunt, unde merito dubitari possit, utrum infantes, ab eis et similibus sic baptizati, verum baptismum sint consecuti, necne; proinde, ut hujusmodi omnis ambiguitas tollatur, et infantum saluti tutius ac melius consulatur; decrevit hæc synodus, ut tales infantes a sacerdotibus baptizentur secundum formam a Christo institutam, et ab ecclesia receptam, in qua quidem ecclesiæ forma sacerdotes proferant hæc verba: ‘Si tu es baptizatus, ego non te baptizo; sed si non es baptizatus, ego te baptizo in nomine Patris,’ &c., adjiciendo etiam aspersionem, oleum, et alia inter baptizandum observari solita. Atque ut dictum decretum ad honorem Dei et infantum salutem cito et facile sortiatur effectum, moneat patrem et matrem dictorum infantum, ut illos deferant aut

deferendos eurent ad suas ecclesias parochiales, et præsentandos vicario, curato, aut alii sacerdoti illius sacramenti legitimo ministro, et hoc ante quindecim dies monitionem talem proxime subsequentes, sub pœna excommunicationis majoris. Insuper prohibet præsens synodus, ne qui infantes imposterum baptizentur, nisi a sacerdotibus, et hoc secundum communem formam ecclesiæ, necessitatis articulo excepto, sub pœna excommunicationis majoris, tam in patrem, quam in matrem, quam etiam in ministros et paternos, et maternas, et alios pœnis a jure statutis.—*Concilium Provinciale totius cleri Scotiani utriusque provinciæ S. Andreae et Glasguensis, habitum Edinburgi, A.D. 1559, cap. 33.*

² *Book of Common Order, Introductory Rubric to Order of Baptism, ed. Sprott and Leisham, 1868, p. 135.*

The later history of the question in these separatist bodies may just be glanced at, and finally disposed of, as it will not be worth while to return to it in connection with the subsequent treatment of the matter within the Church, which it had then ceased to influence.

The Presbyterians strictly confined baptism to those whom they considered to be ordained. The Directory for Public Worship, in 1644, says 'Baptism . . . is not to be administered in any case by any private person, but by a minister of Christ, called to be the steward of the mysteries of God.'³ So again, the confession of faith, sanctioned by the Assembly of Divines in 1646, declares that neither baptism nor the supper of the Lord 'may be dispensed by any but by a minister of the Word, lawfully ordained.'⁴ The Presbyterians seem never to have departed from this rule.⁵ Since, however, they had no true orders, their baptisms, from a Church point of view, were purely lay ministrations.

It was the same abroad among the French protestants, who were under the direct inspiration of Calvin and Beza. At the first national synod of the Reformed Church of France, held at Paris in 1559, they decreed that 'baptism administered by one who has no vocation is wholly void and null.'⁶ They were willing to allow

³ *Directory, Of Baptism*, 1644, p. 39.

⁴ *Confession of Faith*, 1646, xxxvii. 4.

⁵ The Rev. A. W. C. Hallen, of Alloa, a student of registers, informs me that he has never met with an instance, among the registers of the Presbyterians in Scotland, of a baptism by any other than their ministers, except the following one,

in the register of Dunfermline: '1744 Dec . . . Baptized by a sponsor a child born of Jean Paterson (late servant in Dunfermline) borne the . . . of December and . . . the 27 called Robert. Witnesses Samuel Alexander and William Wellwood Church officers.' The lacunæ are in the original.

⁶ *Discipline des Eglises Réformées de France*, chap. xi. can.

a liberal interpretation to the term 'vocation.' La Roque, in controversy with Bossuet, said it was satisfied by 'the appearance of vocation,'—'a vocation which, though not perfect in all its parts, was nevertheless sufficient for the administration of baptism.' Hence they could admit the validity of baptism by heretics, by false pastors, and by papist priests, though not that by laymen.⁷ That the Huguenots lost the possession of true orders, and had pastors who themselves were really but laymen, does not affect the principle of their contention. They repeated their enactments on this point several times. One of the articles of a synod at Poitiers, in 1560, is this: 'Item, the doctor in a Church may not baptize, nor administer the Lord's supper, unless he be ordained a minister as well as a doctor at the same time.'⁸ At this synod it was also debated what was to be done if an infant had been baptized by a private person. It was decided that 'the child shall be brought publicly into the Church there to receive true baptism;' and that, to avoid scandal, sermons should be preached to inform people of the nullity of baptism by private persons.⁹ A synod at Lyons, in 1563, sent a deputation to Geneva to ask counsel of the ministers there on a case of conscience submitted to them as to a baptism of this kind. The reply was: 'That such baptism did not in any wise agree with the institution of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore consequently is of no force, power, validity, or

1. See Quick, *Synodicon in Gallia Reformata*, 1692, p. xlv.

⁷ La Roque, *Réponse au livre de M. l'Evêque de Méaux*, 1683, p. 162; Bossuet, *Traité de la Communion*, *Œuvres*, t. ix. pp. 160,

190. Synods at St. Maixant, 1609, and Vitré, 1617; see Quick, pp. 328, 492.

⁸ Art. 13, Quick, p. 15.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 18.

effect, and that the child ought to be brought to the Church of God, there to be baptized. For to separate the ministration of the sacraments from the pastor's office, it is as if one should tear out a seal to make use of it without the commission or letters patent to which it was affixed. And in this case we must practise that rule of our Lord, "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." This for and in the name of all the assembly, John Calvin.¹ The nullity of 'lay' baptism was again endorsed by synods at Rochelle in 1571, where Beza was chosen moderator,² at Gap in 1603,³ and again at Rochelle in 1607, when midwives' baptism was rejected as 'wholly null and void, because done by one who had no call unto that office.'⁴

In the Church of England, whatever intention there may have been to discourage lay baptism, it was not immediately forbidden. A paper of 'Interpretations and further Considerations,' drawn up by the bishops with reference to Queen Elizabeth's Injunctions of 1559, and preserved among Archbishop Parker's papers, has this clause: 'Item, that private baptism in necessity, as in peril of death, be ministered either by the curate, deacon, or reader, or some other grave and sober man, if the time will suffer.'⁵ The object was, no doubt, principally to check midwives from baptizing too freely. From the nature of the case, it had probably always been they who had baptized with most frequency. Their exceptional liability to find themselves in the presence of necessity had even been officially recognised. It had

¹ Quick, *Synodicon*, pp. 50-53.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 272.

² *Ibid.* p. 97.

⁵ Cardwell, *Doc. Ann.* vol. i. p.

³ *Ibid.* p. 239.

206.

become customary in England to give them an ecclesiastical license, before receiving which they bound themselves by oath to abstain from certain malpractices, and this oath, under the new conditions of the English Church, still included a promise to baptize in due form. Thus, Strype records that, in 1567, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Parker, granted a license to Eleanor Pead, and gives the oath administered to her, in which there occurs the promise: ‘Also, that in the ministration of the sacrament of baptism in the time of necessity, I will use apt and the accustomed words of the same sacrament, that is to say, these words following, or the like in effect; I christen thee in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and none other profane words.’⁶

This baptism by midwives was a constant topic of complaint in the correspondence between the English puritans and the foreign Calvinists. In a letter to Bullinger from two Englishmen, Humphrey and Sampson, July 1566, it is spoken of as one of thirteen particular blemishes still attaching to the Church of England.⁷ It was from abroad that they had learnt their opposition to it. Beza wrote to Bullinger, September 3, 1566, inveighing against the permission to women to baptize in cases of necessity, as a gross error of the Anglican Church.⁸ And to some in England, in the following year, he wrote, that baptism by midwives ‘is not only disliked by us, but seems also altogether intolerable; as arising from the ignorance of the true use of baptism and the public ministry. Therefore, we think the

⁶ Strype, *Annals of the Reformation*, vol. i. part 2, p. 243.

1st series, p. 164.

⁸ *Ibid.* 2nd series, p. 130. Comp.

⁷ *Zurich Letters*, Parker Soc.,

Beza, *De Sac.* q. 144.

ministers should earnestly reprove the retaining such an abuse, but by no means allow such false baptism.’⁹ One, Percival Wiburn, in a complaint of the state of the English Church, also enumerates among the grievances, that baptism in private, and even by women, was permitted.¹ ‘We entirely agree,’ wrote Bishop Grindal and Bishop Horn, in a joint letter to Bullinger and Gualter, February 6, 1567, ‘that women neither can nor ought to baptize infants upon any account whatever.’² George Withers, writing to Bullinger, August 1567, treats this, somewhat unfairly, as a disingenuous attempt to deny that women were allowed to baptize.³ But neither bishop meant probably to do more than express his own disapproval of the practice. This, however, was not absolute, for Bishop Horn, in another letter to Bullinger, speaks of the Prayer Book as allowing ‘baptism in private houses by women in time of necessity, which is only ministered by the woman baptizing the infant who is like to die.’ Bullinger’s remark in reply was: ‘We disapprove of baptism being administered in private houses by midwives or women in time of necessity, or in the prospect of death.’⁴

Happily for the Church of England the power of the foreign reformers was mainly confined to their influence on the minds of English ecclesiastics. They never became her dictators. To write to Bullinger was a vent for the feelings of sympathetic protestant spirits, but it was very little more. It did nothing material towards bringing about a change of practice, for England did not appeal to Zurich for guidance as the French

⁹ Strype, *Life of Grindal*, p. 513.

¹ *Zurich Letters*, 2nd series, p. 361.

² *Ibid.* 1st series, p. 178.

³ *Ibid.* 2nd series, p. 149.

⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 356, 357.

sects did to Geneva. Her real reformation was from within; and this is as true of the efforts to check the liberty of lay baptism as it is of any other part of the movement. For the most part it took the legitimate form of motions in Convocation.

In 1562 the puritans made a determined effort to get Convocation to take up the question, among other abuses which they thought needed reformation. The subject had been seething beforehand, for among the memoranda included in a paper, annotated by Archbishop Parker, of 'General notes of matters to be moved by the clergy in the next parliament and synod,' is this: 'That no private baptism be administered hereafter, but only by those that be ministers of the Church.'⁵ In the lower house, Nowel, Dean of St. Paul's and prolocutor, presented a petition, signed by thirty-two members of Convocation, which included the prayer, 'That none from henceforth be suffered in any wise to baptize, but ministers only.' The clergy would not agree to the entire petition, and it eventually took the form of certain requests to the upper house, subscribed by sixty-four members of the lower. Among these the petition against lay and private baptism held its place, in the wording of Archbishop Parker's notes. Sandys, Bishop of Worcester, also presented a paper, of which the first sentence ran: 'That with her Majesty's authority, with the assistance of the Archbishop of Canterbury, according to the limitations of the act provided in that behalf, might be taken out of the Book of Common Prayer private baptism, which hath respect unto women; who, by the Word of God cannot be ministers of the sacraments or of any one of them.' In spite of some sym-

⁵ Strype, *Annals*, vol. i. part 1, p. 475.

pathy with the movement among certain of the bishops, no resolution was passed, and the subject fell through.⁶

In 1575 another and more successful attempt was made to get the Convocation of Canterbury to act. Fifteen articles passed the two houses, and the twelfth of these was as follows: 'Item. Where[as] some ambiguity and doubt hath risen among divers, by what persons private baptism is to be administered; forasmuch as by the Book of Common Prayer allowed by the statute, the bishop of the diocese is authorised to expound and resolve all such doubts as shall arise concerning the manner how to understand, and to execute the things contained in the said book; it is now by the said archbishop and bishops expounded and resolved, and every one of them doth expound and resolve, that the said private baptism, in case of necessity, is only to be ministered by a lawful minister or deacon, called to be present for that purpose, and by none other. And that every bishop in his diocese shall take order, that this exposition of the said doubt shall be published in writing before the first day of May next coming, in every parish Church of his diocese in this province. And thereby all other persons shall be inhibited to intermeddle with the ministering of baptism privately, being no part of their vocation.'⁷

A great deal too much has been made of this article as a proof that the Church of England rejected lay baptism as invalid. In the first place, it does not necessarily touch the question of validity at all. It is only a disciplinary regulation, which might or might not

⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 500, 508.

⁷ Strype, *Life of Grindal*, p. 540. From MS. copy belonging

to Archbishop Whitgift, who had been prolocutor of the lower house of Convocation in 1575.

be based on a view of invalidity. And, yet more, it does not seem ever to have been promulged, for it is in none of the printed copies of the articles, although it was included in three MS. copies known to Strype.⁸ Heylin, who transcribed the articles from the Journal of Convocation, says of the fifteenth, which is also missing from the printed copies, that it was not put into type, ‘eo quod domina nostra regina (ut dicitur) non assensit eidem.’⁹ He makes no remark on the twelfth; but, as this also does not appear, it may be that the queen objected to it as well as to the fifteenth. Anyhow there was an obvious reason for suppressing it. In spite of the assertions made in the Convocation debate, that the compilers of the Prayer Book did not mean to sanction female baptism,¹ the rubrics, as they then stood, could not rationally be made to forbid lay baptism altogether; and to put out a decision in manifest want of harmony with the wording of the directions in the office would have been both unwise and useless. Nothing but an alteration of the Prayer Book itself could make lay baptism, in necessity, an unlawful practice in the Church of England. At present no alteration was attempted.²

The subject was mooted in a more enduring form in some of the literary controversies of the day. The chief names which appear in the discussion are, on the

⁸ Strype, *Life of Grindal*, p. 289.

He only specifies that it was in two of the MSS., but as he mentions that there were fourteen articles in the third, it may be assumed that the missing one was certainly the fifteenth, and therefore that the twelfth was included.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹ See *ante*, p. 178.

² The question about this twelfth article was considered in some detail in the case of *Mastin v. Escott* (*post*, p. 254). See Curteis, *Report of the Case*, &c. 1841, pp. 40, 252.

one side, that of the well known puritan, Thomas Cartwright, and, on the other, the greater ones of Whitgift and Hooker. Indeed it is to their replies that Cartwright entirely owes his reputation.

In 1572, there appeared the so-called 'Admonition' to Parliament, denouncing many of the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. Cartwright was not its sole author, but it was drawn up with his assistance, and under his supervision. It was considered to require a competent refutation, and Whitgift, then Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, was selected for the task. In the same year he published an 'Answer to the Admonition.' Cartwright forthwith, in 1573, retorted in a 'Reply to the Answer,' and Whitgift, in 1574, brought out a 'Defence of the Answer to the Admonition.' Cartwright wrote a 'Second Reply' in two parts, of which the first appeared in 1575 and the second in 1577. The most celebrated of the series of publications is Whitgift's 'Defence of the Answer.'

Baptism in private, by laymen, and by women, figured prominently in the dispute. Cartwright, in the coarse tone of his party, said that baptism by women was no more a sacrament than was the ordinary daily washing of children by their mothers.³ He said the practice had its origin in an over-literal dwelling upon the effect attributed to 'water' in our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus, coupled with a false pressing of the doctrine of necessity.⁴ He allowed the validity of baptism by heretical ministers, because they had been ordained,⁵ but, he urged, 'Forasmuch as St. Paul said that a man cannot preach which is not sent, so I cannot

³ Cartwright, *Reply*, p. 144.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 143.

⁵ *Rest of Reply*, p. 131.

see how a man can baptize unless that he be sent to that end.’⁶ There was much that was discursive and irrelevant, some that was weak, and not a little that was offensive, in his writing; but, from the nature of the case, the argument as to orders was strong, if Church tradition were to be left out of account.

Whitgift, in his reply, betrays a consciousness of the force of Cartwright’s position. This appears especially in his endeavour to exculpate the Church from any responsibility as to the sanction of female baptism. He denied that women baptized with frequency, saying that he had never known a single instance since the beginning of Queen Elizabeth’s reign.⁷ As his own experience had been mainly confined to the university, this testimony does not go for much. Even if they did baptize, he said, it did not follow that they acted by the authority of the Prayer Book, which meant, he thought, ‘that private baptism is rather to be ministered by some minister (which in time of necessity may soonest be come by) than by any woman.’⁸ But he was scarcely consistent. At least his tone varied. In one place he says, ‘I suspend my judgment for baptizing by women.’⁹ In another he defends its validity by an argument which omits the bearing of ordination on the question. ‘I say,’ he remarks, ‘that baptism ministered by women is true baptism, though it be not lawful for women to baptize, as the baptism also ministered by heretics is true baptism, though they be usurpers of that office.’¹ ‘So far as I can read,’ he says again, ‘the

⁶ Cartwright, *Reply*, p. 144.

vol. iii. p. 493.

⁷ Whitgift, *Works*, Parker Soc. vol. iii. p. 492.

⁹ *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 540.

¹ *Ibid.* p. 532.

⁸ *Ibid.* vol. ii. pp. 493, 496, 533;

opinion of all learned men is that the essential form, and as it were the life of baptism, is to baptize in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; which form being observed, the sacrament remaineth in full force and strength, of whomsoever it be ministered.' ² It is evident that Whitgift himself was satisfied with the traditional view of the Western Church, but that he felt the pressure of the puritans' argument against it, and tried here and there to conciliate them by yielding somewhat of the positiveness with which he might otherwise have enunciated it.

When Whitgift became archbishop he was immediately approached on the subject by the puritan party. In 1583, the very year of his appointment, some of the clergy expressed to him the scruple they felt in subscribing to the Book of Common Prayer, because they said it allowed baptism by women. Whitgift very reasonably replied that 'the Book did not name women when it spake of private baptism ; and their subscription was not required to anything which was not expressed in the Book.' ³

The matter was not allowed to drop. In 1584, a puritan address was presented to the archbishop, containing among other things the petition, 'That all baptizing by midwives and women (which is a cloak of popery, and was first used by heretics, and condemned by the ancient fathers, and likewise by the fourth council of Carthage, afterwards notoriously corrupted and falsified by Gratian, and other, for the maintenance of the said unlawful act) may from henceforth be inhibited and declared void ; and that no bishop, or any

² *Ibid.* p. 528.

Judgment by Sir J. Nicholl, 1811,

³ Daubeny, *Examination of the* p. 75.

of their officers, in the admitting of midwives, do give them any such authority to baptize, as heretofore hath been accustomed.' Whitgift, in his answer, drew a distinction between lawfulness and what he should have called validity, admitting a doubt as to the lawfulness of female baptism, but none as to its validity. 'That the baptism ministered by women is lawful⁴ and good, howsoever they minister it, lawfully or unlawfully (so that the institution of Christ, touching the words and element, be duly used), no learned man ever doubted, until now of late some one or two who, by their singularity in some points of religion, have done more harm, and given the adversary greater advantage, than anything else could do. Neither any of the fathers, nor that council, ever condemned the baptizing of women, in the case of necessity, and extraordinarily. But that they should baptize ordinarily and without necessity, the papists themselves do not allow. I never heard that any bishops professing the gospel did give any such authority to midwives.'⁵ Whitgift must of course here mean that the bishops gave no authority except for urgent occasions, for he cannot have been ignorant of the episcopal license implied in the oath which it had been customary to administer to midwives. This reply probably exactly expressed Whitgift's own mind upon the subject. Irritated by the continued pesterings of the puritans, he speaks out in it more clearly and decisively than in some of his other answers.

A little later Hooker was drawn into the controversy. In the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, published in 1594, he combated the objections to lay baptism, particularly those to baptism by women, with some energy and warmth.

⁴ I.e. valid.

⁵ Strype, *Life of Grindal*, vol. iii. pp. 138, 139.

He is not, however, very felicitous, either in his statement of historical facts or in his reasoning. He takes his stand on the ground, which all would admit, that 'a second baptism was ever abhorred by the Church as a kind of incestuous birth.' Then, after showing, not without a little bias in his representation, that baptism was accepted in the early Church at the hands of heretics, he concludes that it is much less void, 'through any other moral defect in the minister thereof.' Treating the want of ordination as though it were a mere 'moral defect,' he declares that there can never be any iteration where the due form and matter were used. 'If baptism,' he says, 'seriously be administered in the same element and with the same form of words which Christ's institution teacheth, there is no other defect in the world that can make it frustrate, or deprive it of the nature of a true sacrament.' This was the mediæval doctrine, but it does not follow from the early view of heretical baptism, even had that been unanimous.

Cartwright had illustrated his objection to baptism by women, by the simile of a seal stolen from a prince. As this, he says, would not make a grant efficacious if it were set to a deed by one who had no authority to use it, so if a woman steals the seal of holy baptism, and sets it upon anyone, the act is inefficacious because it is usurped and unauthorised. The parallel clearly does not hold, and Hooker says, 'their argument from a stolen seal may return to the place out of which they had it, for it helpeth their cause nothing.' But he immediately falls into a much more fallacious illustration on his own side, when he compares irregular baptism to procreation of children in unlawful wedlock. Regeneration is parallel with natural birth, but there is no

proper analogy between the instrumentalities whereby natural and spiritual generation are effected. Both require human agency for their ordinary accomplishment; but there does not seem to be any fair correspondence between the physical conditions required in procreation, to which God has not made marriage a necessary physical antecedent, and the spiritual conditions required for regeneration, to which, as some think, God has made an ordained ministry necessary. In the one case the child is visibly born; in the other the result belongs to invisible grace, in which it is possible to be mistaken. Moreover, if the simile holds good at all, it suggests limitations. It is not everyone who can equally become the instrument of procreation, apart from age or sex or other conditions. It is a qualified power, and helps little towards the proof of an unqualified ability to baptize.

Hooker's conclusion is, 'We may infer that the administration of this sacrament by private persons, be it lawful or unlawful, appeareth not as yet to be merely void.' Although the weight of the reasons by which he arrives at this result is not great, that of his own name is so considerable in the Church of England, that the mere fact of his having taken this view has perhaps done more to fix the popular acceptance of irregular ministrations of baptism than all the arguments that have been brought to bear on the subject.⁶

Others followed on the same side. Abbott, after-

⁶ Hooker, *Ecc. Pol.* v. lxi., lxii. 'I was speaking upon the subject,' says Mr. Baldwin, 'to one of our most hardworking and respected bishops. His reply was both painful and suggestive. "Well," he

said, "I cannot say that I have read much about the matter; but I learned it from Hooker when I was ordained, and I have taken it for granted ever since!"—*A Matter of Life and Death*, p. 43.

wards Archbishop of Canterbury, in his Oxford lectures, in 1597, laid down, from authorities, that the person of the minister belongs not to the 'esse,' but to the 'bene esse,' of the sacrament, and therefore that lay baptism is valid. 'It is ill done,' he says, 'if by a layman; worse, if by a woman; but it is done, and what is done cannot be undone.' He compares it to the violent entry into the sheepfold by some other way than the legitimate door. Therefore he was against the retention of its permission in the English Prayer Book, which he regarded as a concession to the weakness of the times, unable at once to bear an alteration of the usage which had held its way for so long a period.⁷

Some, however, regarded baptism by women as contrary to the spirit, if not to the letter, of the Prayer Book. The university of Oxford, in its answer to the Millenary Petition, in 1603, stated, 'that the Church of England, nor the Book of Common Prayer, doth not prescribe that baptism should be administered by women; though we deny it not to be baptism, if perchance, de facto, it be by them administered. Fieri non debuit, factum valuit.'⁸ The vice-chancellor and heads of houses at Cambridge endorsed this answer with their approval, in a formal letter to the university of Oxford, dated October 7, 1603.⁹

⁷ Abbott, *Praelectiones*, cap. ii., *De Circumcisione et Baptismo*, Oxford, 1598, pp. 70, 98, 99. 'Male igitur factum est, si laicus; pejus factum, si femina, rem sacrosanc-tam hanc attigerit. Sed factum est; et quod factum est, infectum esse non potest.'

⁸ *Answer of University of Ox-*

ford to the Petition of the Ministers of the Church of England desiring Reformation of Ceremonies, Oxford, 1603, p. 11.

⁹ *Answer to Exceptions against the Bishop of Oxford's Charge by Mr. L. and Dr. B.*, London, 1713, p. 122.

Such an attitude as this of the universities was not calculated to disarm real objections; and the puritans continued in open hostility to every kind of lay baptism. Among its uncompromising opponents, at this time, William Perkins deserves mention, for his theological learning, and for the esteem in which he was then held as a representative divine of that school. He accepted the validity of baptism by wicked and heretical priests because they were ordained, but he entirely repudiated lay baptism, 'for to baptize is part of the public ministry,' given by our Lord's special commission to the apostles. 'He that must perform any part of the public ministry,' he says, 'must have a calling (Rom. x. 14; Heb. v. 4), but mere private persons have no calling to this business. And whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Now the administration of baptism by private persons is without faith; for there is neither precept, nor fit example for it, in the Word of God.'¹

Thus the Reformation left the subject in a position somewhat unsatisfactory to more than one party in the Church of England. The reforming mind, as a whole, was against the practice of lay baptism, although not uniformly against its validity. But the Prayer Book, reasonably understood, still deliberately permitted it.

¹ Perkins, *Commentary on Galatians*, iii. 27, published posthumously in his *Works*, 1613, vol. ii. p. 262.

CHAPTER X.

THE POST-REFORMATION PERIOD.—CENT. XVII.

The East : on heretical baptism ; on lay baptism—Roman Catholic rule : the Ritual ; Bellarmine—Lay baptism in England—James I. and Hampton Court Conference—The 1604 revision : its effect ; lawful minister ; the questions ; conditional baptism ; reception—The Ordinal and Articles—Prayer Book of 1661—English Divines : Sanderson, Ussher, Comber, Taylor, Wilson, Cosin, Thorndike, Sparrow, Bramhall.

THE controversies upon the ministry of baptism, which the Reformation introduced into the Church of England, scarcely touched the Eastern and Roman communions. No marked change or considerable debate occurred in either, during the century which, from the English point of view, is the immediate post-Reformation period.

The East had been brought into communication with one class of the reformers in the latter half of the sixteenth century. The Lutheran divines had then made great overtures to the Greeks, with a view to some kind of reunion. A correspondence took place between them and Jeremiah II., Patriarch of Constantinople ; but it came to an end in 1582, when Jeremiah was driven from the patriarchal throne, and no practical result, or probability of result, came from the negotiations. As regards the minister of baptism, it served, however, to put on record one or two points indicating the Eastern mind at that date.

Jeremiah dwelt emphatically on the necessity of triple immersion, differing herein from the Tubingen theologians, who, although they stated that it was practised among themselves in some parts of Germany, were obliged to insist on the sufficiency of their more ordinary usage of affusion, and that not always a triple one. The error was important enough, in Jeremiah's opinion, to invalidate Western baptism, or at any rate to justify its rejection by the East, in discussing terms of communion. But he does not seem to have made it the basis of a charge of heresy, and consequently it is a point which concerns the form of baptism rather than its minister.

A century later, Dositheos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, in a confession of faith appended to the decrees of the council of Bethlehem, in 1672, says that imperfect faith does not invalidate the baptism of heretics if it is administered in due form; and therefore they are not to be rebaptized on admission to the orthodox Church.¹ Consequently the Eastern view at that time was not that heresy incapacitated the administrator. Elsewhere he dwells upon the probable invalidity of the single affusion of the Latin heretics, though he mentions the indulgence of accepting Western converts with unction alone as still in use.² There were, however, exceptions, for he refers to a certain case where an orthodox Greek had married a woman from some Western body, who was rebaptized before the marriage took place.³

¹ Οἱ γὰρ αἰρετικοὶ, οὓς τὴν αἵρεσιν ἀποσεισαμένους, καὶ ἰ-ροστεθέντας τῇ καθολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, δέχεται ἡ ἐκκλησία· καίτοι ἔλλιπῆ ἔσχηκότες τὴν πίστιν τέλειον ἔλαβον τὸ βάπτισμα· ὅθεν τελείαν ὕστερον τὴν πίστιν κεκτημένοι οὐκ ἀναβαπτίζονται.—Synodus Hiero-

solymitana, *Confessio Dosithei*, xv.; Kimmel, *Monumenta Fidei Eccles. Orient.*, 1850, part i. p. 451.

² Dositheos, *Τόμον Ἀγάπης*, p. 571; *Δωδεκαβίβλος*, p. 525.

³ Dositheos, *Δωδεκαβίβλος*, p. 854.

There was variety also in the Russian communion. In 1629, the sacred synod, under the patriarch Philaretus, discussed the validity of Western baptism, some converts having been received only with unction. The synod decreed that proselytes from the Latins must be baptized. In 1666, however, the subject was raised again before a great synod at Moscow, by King Alexius; and, under the pressure of circumstances of the time, the custom of indulgence was reverted to, and proselytes were permitted to join with the ceremony of anointing alone.

This rule held its own into the next century, so thoroughly that in 1708, Cyprian, and in 1718, Jeremiah III., both Patriarchs of Constantinople, decided that those who came over from the Lutherans and Calvinists were only to be anointed. The decisions were in answer to Russian questions, and perhaps were not meant to apply outside Russia. Here the case was complicated, to an extent of which the patriarchs were possibly scarcely aware, by a lack of ordination, as well as by heresy. But they appear to have considered the matter merely from the point of view of the form in which baptism was administered, and it is difficult to avoid the inference that the East at this time laid no very essential stress on the necessity of an ordained minister. Certainly 'economy' had stepped in, and had considerably modified the strictness of early Eastern discipline, when baptism by protestant schismatics was accepted as sufficient.⁴

Upon lay baptism, in the East, there subsisted that divergence between private opinion and authoritative decrees, which has already been noticed at an earlier

⁴ See Constantine Oiconomos, *Τὰ Σωζόμενα Συγγράμματα*, pp. 506-509.

date. The private opinion was still on the stricter side, although probably not to the same extent as formerly. The use of lay baptism had on the whole apparently progressed.

The objection to it seems to have held its ground longest, as perhaps was natural among the conservative races of the East, with the masses of the people. Thus, when Arcudius, a Roman Catholic priest, wrote in 1626 on the points of agreement between the Eastern and Western communions, he was obliged to admit that in Greece, Russia, and all the provinces using the Greek rites, they almost without exception 'would rather let their children depart this life without baptism, if a priest was absent, than wash them with the saving water, because they think that it is not lawful for the laity to bestow this gift, even in necessity.'⁵ The testimony of Arcudius is the more unimpeachable that it made against the community of ideas which he desired to prove.

At the same time, however, such decisions as came from those in authority were in favour of admitting lay baptism in necessity. While Jeremiah II. and the Tübingen divines differed about triple immersion and affusion, they were able to agree about baptism by the laity. Unlike the other protestant sects, the Lutherans permitted it when there was danger of death.⁶ Jere-

⁵ Arcudius, *De Concordia Ecclesiæ occidentalis et orientalis in septem sacramentorum administratione*, i. xi., 1626, p. 24.

⁶ Bingham quotes from two Lutheran professors of divinity in the 17th century, Brochmand of Copenhagen, and Gerhard of Jena, who both state that, though public

baptism may only be bestowed by a minister of the Word, yet that baptism may be given in private by anyone, in danger of death. Gerhard adds that the necessity of the sacrament is not in respect of God, who can regenerate without it, but in respect of man, who is responsible for carrying out the divine command

miah, in his correspondence with them, says equally that 'in urgent necessity it is allowable for lay people to baptize.' He also admits the validity of baptism by an unworthy priest, which would possibly include one who was involved in heresy.⁷

In 1625, Metrophanes Critopulus, Patriarch of Constantinople, put out a confession of faith, especially for the information of the reformed bodies. In this he says: 'When necessity presses, the child is baptized immediately on its birth. If a priest is not present, the midwife does it, saying the divine words. And if the child recovers, this baptism shall be deemed sufficient.'⁸

Another Greek confession, of the same period, says that, while regular baptism can only be performed by a lawful priest, yet in necessity any man or woman may administer it, and 'such baptism has so much power that it is an undoubted seal of eternal salvation.'⁹

Similarly, Dositheos says of baptism, 'It is administered by the priest alone, though in necessity it can be

so far as lies in his power. Brochmand, *System. Theol.* tom. ii. *De Bapt.* v. 3; Gerhard, *Loc. Commun. de Bapt.* xxxiv. See Bingham, vol. viii. pp. 100-103.

⁷ Ἀνάγκης δὲ κατεπειγούσης, καὶ τοῖς λαϊκοῖς βαπτίζειν ἐξεῖναι.—See Bingham, vol. viii. p. 97, from Hottinger, *Hist. Eccles.* tom. i. p. 632. Τὸ βάπτισμα τοῦ ἀνέρου δι' ἀνάγκης οὐκ ἀποβάλλεται.—Jerem. can. 7, in Arcudius, *De Concord. Eccles.* p. 25.

⁸ Ἀνάγκης δὲ κατεπειγούσης εὐθὺς μετὰ τὴν γέννησιν βαπτίζεται τὸ γεννηθέν. Κἂν πρεσβύτερος μὴ πάρεστιν, ἡ μαῖα τοῦτο ποιεῖ, λέγουσα τὰ ἄνωθεν θεῖα ῥήματα. Εἰ δὲ τὸ βρέφος ἀναρρώθῃ, ἀρκεσθήσεται τούτῳ τῷ

βαπτίσματι.—Metroph. Crit. *Confessio*, vii. Εἴρεται γὰρ, καὶ τὴν μαῖαν βαπτίζειν ἐν ἀνάγκῃ ἄνευ τῆς οἰασοῦν τελετῆς.—xxii. See Kimmel, *Monumenta Fidei Eccles. Orient.*, 1850, part ii. pp. 110, 201.

⁹ Καὶ τὸ διατεταγμένον βάπτισμα δὲν πρέπει νὰ γίνεται ἀπὸ ἄλλον τινὰ παρὰ ἀπὸ τὸν νόμιμον ἱερέα· μὰ εἰς καιρὸν τινὸς ἀνάγκης ἡμπορεῖ νὰ τὸ κάμῃ τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο καὶ κοσμικὸν πρόσωπον ἀνδρὸς ἢ γυναικὸς. . . . Καὶ τὸ τοιοῦτον βάπτισμα τόσῃν δύναντι ἔχει, ὅπου ἔστωνας καὶ νὰ μὴ δίδεται δεύτερον, εἶναι ἀναμφίβολος σφραγὶς τῆς σωτηρίας τῆς αἰωνίου.—*Confessio Orthodoxa*, i. 103; Kimmel, part i. p. 174.

given by another person, if he is one of the orthodox, and has the intention fitting for holy baptism.’¹

A little later, in 1691, Gabriel Severus, Archbishop of Philadelphia, in a little treatise on the sacraments, says, ‘When a priest is not present, and necessity urges . . . a Christian lay person, whether woman or man, is able to baptize.’² In support of his assertion he quotes the canons of Nicephorus, and also, which is curious as showing that Western influence had crept in, he refers to the opinion of St. Augustine.

The East, at large, then, in the seventeenth century, did not very materially differ from the West in its doctrine concerning the minister of baptism. But it does not seem to have inculcated the duty of baptizing in necessity so industriously as the West had done; and therefore the actual practice of lay baptism, and its popular acceptance among the people, was certainly much less than in other parts of Christendom which had not fallen under the power of the Reformation movement.

Some relics, however, of earlier and stricter custom remained among the so-called ‘heretical’ Churches of the East. The Copto-Jacobites, the Syro-Jacobites, the Nestorians, and probably the Armenians and orthodox Syrians, apparently still rejected lay baptism altogether, and do so to the present time.³

¹ Ἀποτελείται δὲ διὰ μόνου τοῦ ἱερέως, καὶ κατ’ ἀνάγκην ἀπροφάσιστον ἔχει γίνεσθαι καὶ δι’ ἑτέρου ἀνθρώπου, πλὴν ὀρθοδόξου καὶ σκοπὸν ἔχοντος τὸν ἀρμόδιον τῷ θεῷ βαπτίσματι.—Syn. Hieros. Conf. Dosithei, xvi. Kimmel, part i. p. 454.

² Μὴ παρόντος ἱερέως, ἀνάγκης

κατεπειγούσης, δύναται καὶ ἱεροδιάκων βαπτίζειν, καὶ λαϊκὸς χριστιανὸς, ἄντε γυνή, ἢ ἄντε ἄρρην.—Gab. Sev. Συνταγματίον περὶ τῶν ἁγίων μυστηρίων, 1691, p. 58.

³ Neale, *History of Eastern Church*, vol. i. p. 949.

Roman doctrine on the question of the minister of baptism underwent no particular change of expression during the period immediately succeeding the Reformation. The effect of protestant opinion, where it had any effect at all, was only to induce reiterated statements on the other side; but these were simply repetitions of the common mediæval view.

A revision of the Roman Ritual was published in 1614, during the pontificate of Paul V. It is that which is still in use, and it exactly states the mature Roman teaching on the subject.

A preface to the office for baptizing adults deals with heretical baptism. It says that heretics are to be baptized when the form or matter of baptism has not been used; but 'when the right form and matter has been observed, only the omitted portions are to be supplied, unless it shall seem otherwise to the bishop, for reasonable cause.'⁴ It is obvious that the remarkable clause as to the bishop's discretion leaves the widest possible opening for the rejection of baptism by persons outside the Roman communion, who come indiscriminately under the class of heretics. It is not in any way defined what is to constitute a 'reasonable cause.' Roman Catholics, therefore, have every liberty, under their own rule, to rebaptize converts from other communions, if it seems good to the bishop. This permission is not, however, consistent with the received view that all baptism is valid by whomsoever administered, if only the form and matter are correct.

⁴ Hæretici vero ad catholicam ecclesiam venientes, in quorum baptismo debita forma aut materia servata non est, rite baptizandi sunt: . . . ubi vero debita forma, et

materia servata est, ommissa tantum suppleantur, nisi rationabili de causa aliter episcopo videatur.—*Rit. Rom. De Bapt. Adult.*

The Ritual lays down precise directions for baptism in cases of urgency. ‘The lawful minister of baptism is, indeed, the parish priest, or some other priest, of the parish, or delegated by the ordinary of the place; but whenever an infant or an adult is in peril of life, he may be baptized without solemnity by anyone, in any language, either by a cleric or a laic, even one who is excommunicated, either by faithful or unfaithful, either by a catholic or a heretic, either by a man or a woman, observing, however, the form and intention of the Church. But if a priest is present, he is to be preferred to a deacon, a deacon to a subdeacon, a cleric to a laic, and a man to a woman, unless on account of modesty it is becoming that a woman rather than a man should baptize an infant not entirely delivered, or unless she knows the form and manner of baptizing best. Wherefore the parish priest ought to take care that the faithful, especially midwives, observe and keep the right form of baptizing. The father or mother ought not to baptize their own child, except on the verge of death, when no one else is to be found who can baptize, and then they contract no affinity which shall hinder the use of matrimony.’⁵

⁵ Legitimus quidem baptismi minister est parochus, vel alius sacerdos a parochio, vel ab ordinario loci delegatus; sed quoties infans aut adultus versatur in vitæ periculo, potest sine solemnitate a quocumque baptizari, in qualibet lingua, sive clerico, sive laico etiam excommunicato, sive fideli, sive infideli, sive catholico, sive hæretico, sive viro, sive fœmina, servata tamen forma et intentione ecclesiæ. Sed si adsit sacerdos, diacono

præferatur, diaconus subdiacono, clericus laico, et vir fœminæ; nisi pudoris gratia deceat fœminam potius, quam virum baptizare infantem non omnino editum, vel nisi melius fœmina sciret formam et modum baptizandi. Quapropter curare debet parochus, ut fideles, præsertim obstetrices, rectum baptizandi ritum probe teneant, et servent. Pater aut mater propriam prolem baptizare non debet, præterquam in mortis articulo, quando

Cardinal Bellarmine may be taken as an accredited exponent of Roman theology as it settled down under the attacks of the Reformation. In speaking of the minister of baptism, he lays down six clear propositions as embodying the teaching of the catholic doctors of the Church. 1. It is the right of bishops, and of priests in subordination to bishops, to baptize by virtue of their office. 2. It belongs to deacons, also by virtue of their office, to baptize in the absence of the priest, or at his direction.⁶ 3. The laity may never administer solemn baptism, nor baptize at all in the presence of the clergy, or ever except in necessity. 4. The baptized laity are allowed to baptize in necessity; 'for of this,' he says, 'I find there has never been any doubt in the Church, so that the heresy of Calvin is novel and unheard of.' 5. Unbaptized persons can baptize in necessity, though he allows that some of the fathers questioned this, since they based the right to baptize on the power of giving what one has received; but the council of Florence had decided the matter. 6. Women may baptize in extreme necessity. He gives authorities for all these propositions, which very fairly sum up the teaching of the middle ages.⁷ In another of the same disputatory

alius non reperitur, qui baptizet: neque tunc ullam contrahunt cognitionem, quæ matrimonii usum impediatur.—Rit. Rom. *De Min. Bapt.*

⁶ To claim baptism as the right of the *office* of a deacon was a point in which the later theology was in advance of earlier opinion. See *ante*, p. 140; and Cajetan, as late as the sixteenth century: Non spectat autem ad diaconos prædicare, aut baptizare, ex officio.—*Ad Summæ*

Aquin. III. lxvii. 1.

⁷ Catholicæ doctores communi consensu sex pronuntiata affirmant. Primo, jus baptizandi ex officio ordinario convenire solis sacerdotibus, id est, episcopis et presbyteris, sic tamen, ut presbyteris conveniat cum subordinatione et dependentia ab episcopis. . . . Secundo docent, diaconis quoque ex officio convenire baptizare, sed in absentia sacerdotum, aut eorum jussu. . . . Tertio catholicæ docent,

treatises he discusses the validity of sacraments given in sport. He states it as his opinion that where there is no intention to baptize, the act is null; but that if the intention is to baptize, even though there is no idea of sacramental efficacy, it must hold good. Thus, the baptisms attributed to the young Athanasius were valid, because he intended to baptize, although only in play.⁸

In England, the reiterated objections to the recognition of lay baptism in the Book of Common Prayer at last took definite effect, mainly through the advocacy of King James I. Controversialists have often argued that he could not really have held very strong opinions on the subject, because his own sons had been baptized in Scotland by Presbyterians, and he never took any steps to have them rebaptized. But this seems to be a mistake. James was not a Presbyterian. He had himself been baptized by the Archbishop of St. Andrew's,

nunquam licere laicis solemniter baptizare, neque etiam privatim præsentate sacerdote, aut diacono, aut iis etiam absentibus, extra casum necessitatis. . . . Quarto docent, laicis baptizatis licere in casu necessitatis baptizare. . . . Quinto docent, etiam non baptizatis in casu necessitatis licere baptismum dare, si sciant ritum. De hoc tamen veteres dubii fuisse videntur. . . . Ceterum res jam definita est in concilio generali, ut Augustinus cupiebat. Nam in Florentino concilio habetur, etc. . . . Sexto docent, non modo viros, sed etiam feminas in extrema necessitate posse baptizare.'—Bellarm. *De Sacram. Bapt.* vii.

⁸ Duobus modis posse per jocum

sacramenta conferri. Uno modo, ut qui ludunt, intendant vere sacramenta conferre, sed ob finem recreandi animum eo modo, quomodo possent alii vere intendere sacramenta conferre, sed ob finem lucrandæ pecuniæ. Et hic ludus non impedit veritatem sacramenti, quia hic jocus est extrinsecus ipsi sacramentali actioni. Alio modo, ut qui ludunt, intendant non vere sacramenta conferre, sed illudere, et decipere, quomodo qui Christum purpura induebant, eique dicebant, *Ave, Rex Judæorum*, non intendebant eum regem facere, sed ei illudere. Et hic ludus impedit veritatem sacramenti, quia hic jocus est intrinsecus actioni.—Bellarm. *De Sacram. in Genere*, I. xxviii.

‘with all ceremonies accustomed in the Roman Church,’ says Spottiswoode, ‘the spittle excepted, which the Queen did inhibit. . . . Without the doors stood all the noblemen professors of the reformed religion.’⁹ Charles I. was born at Dunfermline, in 1600, and ‘the christening was hastened because of the weakness of the child.’¹ The rite was performed by David Lindsay, a Presbyterian; but Bishop Robert Forbes, in one of his letters, states that he had ‘found an incontestible proof’ that this man ‘was really in holy orders before his embracing the reformation in Scotland.’² If this were so, Charles at least was not baptized by a layman, and the King was no doubt aware of it. The same may have been the case with his other children. If not, it probably was by no choice of his own that they lacked the ministry of a priest, and his principles, though strongly opposed to lay baptism, would have prohibited their rebaptism afterwards by a priest.

The King had no doubt been approached on the subject by the puritans. In a paper of Archbishop Hutton’s, ‘touching certain matters like to be brought in question before the King’s most excellent majesty, at the conference at court,’ he mentions, ‘One chief thing is misliked, that women, midwives, and laymen, seem to be permitted to baptize in time of necessity.’³ When the Hampton Court conference met, in 1604, the King at once introduced the topic. Dr. Montague, Dean of the Chapel Royal, who was a member of the conference, says: ‘For the private baptism it held three hours at

⁹ John Spottiswoode, *Hist. of the Church in Scotland*, 1851, vol. ii. p. 42.

¹ *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 91.

² *Journals of Bishop Forbes*, 1886, p. 62.

³ Cardwell, *Conferences on the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 155.

least ; the King alone disputing with the bishops, so wisely, wittily and learnedly, with that pretty patience, as I think never man living heard the like.’⁴ Dr. Barlow, Dean of Chester, also a member of the conference, drew up a report as to it afterwards, in which he says of the King’s view as to the persons who might minister baptism, ‘That any but a lawful minister might baptize anywhere, he utterly disliked ; and in this point his highness grew somewhat earnest against the baptizing by women and laics.’ Yet he did not dispute its validity, for though he thought baptism ought not to be administered except by lawfully ordained ministers, he ‘yet utterly disliked all rebaptization, although either women or laics had baptized.’

Whitgift, now archbishop, maintained ‘that the administration of baptism by women and lay persons was not allowed in the practice of the Church, but inquired of by bishops in their visitation, and censured ; neither,’ he said, ‘do the words in the book infer any such meaning.’ The King, however, insisted very justly that the office, as it then stood, plainly gave permission to private persons to baptize. Bishop Babington, of Worcester, thought that the wording was intentionally ambiguous ; but Bishop Bancroft, of London, and Bishop Bilson, of Winchester, both argued that it was in accordance with Scripture and antiquity to allow lay baptism in necessity, and that the leave contained in the Prayer Book was in accordance with catholic rule.⁵

Dr. Montague says that in the end the King won out of the bishops, as to baptism, ‘that it should only

⁴ Cardwell, *Conferences*, p. 139.

⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 172-176.

be administered by ministers, yet in private houses, if occasion required; and that whosoever else should baptize should be under punishment.’⁶ The ultimate result was not, however, expressed in such an emphatic form. The Prayer Book was only altered by withdrawing all mention of others than the ‘lawful’ minister, so as to omit explicit authorisation of lay baptism. Nothing was inserted which explicitly condemned it. The title of the office for private baptism was expanded by adding the words, ‘by the minister of the parish, or any other lawful minister that can be procured.’ In the rubrics, the words, ‘baptize not their children at home,’ were replaced by, ‘procure not their children to be baptized at home.’ For, ‘them that be present,’ was substituted, ‘the minister that be present;’ and the clause, ‘one of them shall name the child, and dip him in water,’ was changed into, ‘the child being named by some one of them that is present, the said lawful minister shall dip it in the water.’ The other alterations were merely verbal, in order to bring the whole into harmony.⁷

Very much has been written, and no small controversy raised, as to the effect which these changes had on the discipline of the Church of England upon lay baptism. On the one hand, it is urged that the withdrawal of its permission was tantamount to a rejection of its validity; on the other that invalidity is not to be inferred from silence as to its approval.

Some have ventured to maintain that a ‘lawful minister’ does not necessarily mean one in holy orders, and that it may include a layman, on the supposition

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 139.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 218.

that a layman can lawfully baptize. But it is impossible to hold this contention in the face of the history of the change. It is indisputable that the Hampton Court revisers intended it to mean a bishop, priest, or deacon. It does not, however, follow, as some would conclude, that the Church of England rejects all other ministries of baptism. No one else is a 'regular' minister of the sacrament, but regularity and validity are not necessarily synonymous terms. In the Roman office the officiant is called 'sacerdos,' as in the English he is the 'lawful minister;' yet under the Roman discipline a layman is a valid, though an irregular, administrator. The English and Roman offices are here exactly on a par.

There are four questions to be asked of those who bring a privately baptized child to be received into the congregation, before the priest is to certify that it is 'lawfully baptized.' The first of these is this, 'By whom was this child baptized?' It is argued, with much apparent show of force, that this question would be meaningless if it were not material whether the baptizer was properly qualified or not. It must mean, so it is said, that the priest is to ascertain whether he was a 'lawful minister' or no. This argument, however, loses its weight when it is remembered that the inquiry stood in exactly the same position in the first three English Prayer Books, where lay baptism was certainly contemplated as valid. The purpose of the question may, therefore, only be similar to that of the next, 'Who was present when this child was baptized?' It can be of no consequence to the validity of the baptism who happened to be present. But the information thus elicited may contribute much to the priest's judgment

as to whether all is likely to have been done 'in due order.' If the baptizer and the whole company were very ignorant people, the liability to error would be much greater than if they were intelligent Church people. The fact that the question was not new when the changes were made prohibits a stricter pressing of its meaning, at any rate in close argument.

In 1604, the remaining inquiries were changed so as to run thus: 'Because some things essential to this sacrament may happen to be omitted through fear or haste, in such times of extremity; therefore I demand further of you, With what matter was this child baptized? With what words was this child baptized?' Both questions occurred in the earlier Prayer Books, with only the difference that the first was in the form, 'With what thing, or what matter they did baptize the child?' which no doubt is more suggestive of lay baptism than the revised version of it. But the clause which introduces these two questions was added in 1604. Why did the revisers insert it before the inquiries as to the 'matter' and 'words,' and not before the whole series of questions, including that as to the minister? It is difficult to escape the inference that they regarded the matter and words as 'essential' in a very different degree from the need that the minister should be an ordained person. It would almost seem as though they purposely intended to counterbalance the absence of permission to any but a 'lawful minister,' by throwing an especial emphasis upon the examination as to these two points. Some have urged that the very existence of the two latter questions is a proof that lay baptism was contemplated, because it would be absurd to suppose that a priest would have made a mistake as

to the matter or words, even in a case of emergency; but, whether this be so or not, as the literal reading of the rubric is that they are to be asked, 'if the child were baptized by any other lawful minister,' it must not be held that they cannot apply when the baptizer had been such a 'lawful minister.'

Two other questions, given in the earlier Prayer Books, disappeared in 1604. Their omission suggests nothing with reference to the debate. One, 'Whether they called upon God for grace and succour in that necessity?' may have been dropped because such prayer would not be essential. The other, 'Whether they think the child to be lawfully and perfectly baptized?' might reasonably be thought superfluous, and not likely to produce any answer of value.

That the intention was to indicate two absolute essentials, and no more, is strengthened by the rubric as to conditional baptism, added also after the Hampton Court conference. The hypothetical form is there ordered to be used, 'if they which bring the infant to the Church do make such uncertain answers to the priest's questions, as that it cannot appear that the child was baptized with water, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (which are essential parts of baptism).' Those who take a strong view against lay baptism reply that the questions as to the matter and form presuppose a 'lawful minister,' and that the whole inquiry drops if the minister was not 'lawful.' They point out that the water and words are merely called 'essential parts,' and not the only essentials of baptism. Yet, if the 'lawful minister' were equally essential, one would expect that it should not be left to be so indirectly inferred.

As regards the office for reception, a middle view has been sometimes suggested, which finds much support from the letter of the Prayer Book, though it leads to a very unsatisfactory conclusion. It is that the service may not be used for any child baptized by a layman. 'The rubric,' it is said, 'does not grant a federal admission or presentation into the Church, of a child not baptized by a lawful minister.'⁸ And certainly the form of the certification to the people, 'that in this case all is well done, and according unto due order,' seems scarcely appropriate when perhaps 'due order' appears to have been wanting. But it is to be observed that the formula is less distinct than that which a priest is to use when he has himself baptized the child—'according to the due and prescribed order of the Church.' It omits the word 'prescribed,' and does not say that the order is that 'of the Church.' Moreover, if the suggested opinion is correct, it leaves the unhappy child in an extraordinary position. Its baptism is not to be repeated, and yet it may not be formally received into the congregation. It is inconceivable that the Church should willingly leave anyone in such an anomalous condition.

The fact is that the changes of 1604 cannot be interpreted entirely by their own light, apart from the history of their origin. They were introduced chiefly out of deference to the King. The bishops would probably have preferred to leave things as they were; at any rate they were not altogether at one in their own views on the question. The result was

⁸ Hill, *Compendious Speculation upon valid and invalid Baptism*, 1713, p. 25. See also Hutton, *Remarks upon Decision in Court of Arches*, 1811, p. 16; Bishop Dowden, *Charge*, 1888, pp. 18, 19.

inevitably that lay baptism was left in an ambiguous position. It was neither permitted nor condemned. We have King James's own testimony that this was what was intended. The purpose was to discourage it, and to make it irregular, not to declare it invalid.⁹

Cosin thought the alteration was well, 'to avoid the baptizing of midwives or others, that were no lawful ministers ordained for that purpose.' But he notices a doubt as to whether the Hampton Court revision was legal according to the Act of Uniformity. Since Convocation afterwards accepted it, the legality of the present form may, however, be freely granted. Cosin also notices that some more explicit grappling with a difficulty was requisite. 'It is not here said,' he observes, 'what shall be done in this case when a lawful minister cannot be found, or whether the child ought to be baptized again or no, when only a midwife or some other such hath baptized it before.'¹

Sometimes it has been sought to confirm the interpretation, which would take the silence of the present office as condemnatory of lay baptism, by appealing to the preface to the ordinal, and to the Thirty-Nine Articles. The preface forbids any man 'to execute any of the functions' of a bishop, priest, or deacon, except he be ordained; and the 23rd Article says, 'It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute

⁹ *Laicorum vero baptismum, aut feminarum, ut fieri legibus suis vetat, sic factum ex legitima formula quodammodo non improbat, baptismum esse pronuncians, etsi non legitime administratum.*—James I.

to Card. Perron, reported by Casaubon, *Ep.* 838, ed. 1709, p. 496. See also Featly, *Cygnus Cantio*, q. 21.

¹ Cosin, *Works, Ang. Cath. Lib.*, vol. v. p. 521.

the same.' Unquestionably holy baptism is a sacrament, the administration of which belongs to the functions of an episcopal ministry. But those who draw the passages into the service of the present controversy forget that both the Preface to the Ordinal and the 23rd Article stood in this same shape when the Prayer Book office expressly allowed laymen to baptize in necessity. The restriction cannot in either, therefore, be held to apply to baptism in circumstances of urgency, unless this exception to the rule can clearly be proved to be forbidden elsewhere.

The final revision in 1661 did not considerably affect the position in which the matter was left in 1604. The words, 'by the minister of the parish or any other lawful minister that can be procured,' which had been added then to the title, were removed into the third rubric, where they were less cumbersome than in the heading. It is difficult to find any other purpose in the change, although there have not been wanting those who have imagined that it has some bearing on the controversies as to the minister.

At the same time there was added the office for the baptism of 'such as are of riper years.' The preface to the Prayer Book assigns as the reason for its need, 'the growth of anabaptism.' It has been said that if the revisers had regarded lay and schismatical baptism as invalid, they would have given, as a further reason, that numbers had grown up without true baptism during the time of the Commonwealth and the introduction of dissent. The absence of any such remark is thought to imply an acceptance of the irregular baptism of the sects. But it would scarcely have been competent for those who were revising the Book to have expressed a

definite judgment on so difficult a matter, requiring at least the decision of a provincial synod. Whatever their own views had been, they must have abstained from so recording them. At the same time, it is probably true that the revisers would have allowed the sufficiency of these baptisms, pending some decision of the Church. Their private opinion, however, does not bind the Church of England.

One other change was made in 1661, in the wording of the permission given to deacons to baptize. In 1549 it ran: 'It pertaineth to the office of a deacon . . . to baptize and preach if he be commanded by the bishop.' In 1552 and 1559, there was the slight substitution of 'admitted thereto' for 'commanded.' Now the deacon's duty as to baptizing was more exactly defined as, 'in the absence of the priest to baptize infants.' The restriction here implied is not unimportant. The deacon was, according to ancient precedent, only to baptize when the more proper minister could not be had, and the circumstances pressed. Now he was given no permission to baptize adults, presumably unless in dire necessity, nor even infants in the presence of a priest. This is the present discipline of the English Church.

There can be no doubt that the practice of lay baptism by midwives and laymen gradually declined very much after the alterations in the Prayer Book, excepting of course the schismatical baptisms among dissenters. It is impossible, however, to obtain sufficient information to trace the way in which it fell into disuse. Even the registers of the time rarely afford any certain guide. In that of St. Mary's Woolchurch, in London, there is one curious instance: '1678, Feb.

S, Baptized Robert Entry, found in Dr. Tabor's entry. Mr. Philips baptized it.'² Mr. Philips was the registrar. The child was evidently a deserted infant, discovered probably in a dying state, and taken to Mr. Philips as a parish officer. The surname is obviously coined from the place in which the baby was found.

The opinions of a few of the leading English divines of the seventeenth century may be added. On the whole their inclination was against lay baptism, but with some exceptions.

Sanderson rejected baptism by women, saying they would do 'well to go teach all nations before they baptize them.' He speaks of the permission allowed them to baptize as 'the singular absurdity of the Church of Rome.'³

Ussher says: 'Baptism is a part of the public ministry of the Church, and Christ has given warrant and authority to none to baptize, but those whom He has called to preach the gospel,—Go, preach and baptize (Matt. xxviii. 19). Those only may stand in the Name of God Himself, and ministerially set to the seal of the covenant; and it is a monstrous presumption for women or any other private persons (who are not called) to meddle with such high mysteries, nor can there be any case of necessity to urge.'⁴

Comber was of the same mind. 'Our Church,' he says, with reference to the changed rubrics, 'requires it to be done by a lawful minister. I know there are some allegations out of antiquity which seem to allow of a layman to baptize in cases of great necessity. But

² Hallen, *Muthill Register*, p. x. p. 141.

³ Sanderson, *Sermon ad populum* at Grantham, *Works*, 1854, vol. iii.

⁴ Ussher, *Body of Divinity*, 3rd ed., 1648, p. 412.

there are others of the fathers who disallow that practice; and certainly it is a great presumption for an ordinary person to invade the ministerial office without any warrant; and as to the pretence that a child may be in danger, I suppose the salvation of the child may be as safe upon the stock of God's mercy without any baptism, as with a baptism which is not commanded by God, and to which He hath made no promises. So that where God gives not opportunity of a person who may do it aright, it seems better to leave it undone.⁵

Jeremy Taylor, in one of his treatises, accepts baptism by a layman or a woman, as a thing which ought not to be done, but is valid when it is done.⁶ This was only in a passing sentence, and his more mature judgment was in favour of rejecting its validity. He writes strongly, and at some length, upon the point, in his *Clerus Domini, or Office Ministerial*. 'That the lay person,' he says, 'shall convey "rem sacramenti," or be "the minister of sacramental grace," is nowhere revealed in Scripture, and is against the analogy of the gospel; for the "verbum reconciliationis"—all the whole ministry of reconciliation—is entrusted to the priest, "nobis," says St. Paul, "to us who are ambassadors." And what difference is there, if cases of necessity be pretended in the defect of other ministries, but that they also may be invaded, and cases of necessity may, by other men, also be numbered in the other sacrament? . . . For my own particular, I wish we would make no more necessities than God made, but

⁵ Comber, *Companion to the Temple, Office for Priv. Bap.* Wheatly adopts this passage of Comber's, almost verbatim, without

acknowledgment; *On Book of Common Prayer*, 7th ed. p. 381.

⁶ Taylor, *Discourse of Confirmation*, iv., *Works*, vol. xi. p. 268.

that we leave the administration of the sacraments to the manner of the first institution, and the clerical offices be kept within their cancels, that no lay hand may pretend a reason to usurp the sacred ministry.'⁷

At quite the end of the century, Bishop Wilson says of baptism, 'This is one of the mysteries committed by Christ to His ministers, and to them only.'⁸

Others, however, spoke less decidedly. Casaubon, who had much opportunity of becoming acquainted with the religious opinions of King James's reign, said that laymen were forbidden by the revised Prayer Book to baptize, but that the Church did not entirely reject their act if they had performed it.⁹

Cosin, in a strange letter to a Mr. Cordel, Feb. 7, 1650, favouring communion with the French protestants, says, 'As, in the case of baptism, we take just exceptions against a layman or a woman that presumes to give it, and may as justly punish them by the censures of the Church wherein they live, for taking upon them to do that office, which was never committed unto them, yet, if once they have done it, we make not their act and administration of baptism void, nor presume we to iterate the sacrament after them—so may it well be in the case of ordination, and the ministers of the reformed congregations in France.'¹

Thorndike more than once speaks of the validity of baptism if it is administered by a Christian. Beyond that he was not prepared to go. 'Because,' he says, 'baptism is the gate, as well of the invisible Church as

⁷ Taylor, *Office Ministerial*, iv. 8, 12, &c., *Works*, vol. xiv. pp. 447, 449. *Comp. Ductor Dubitantium*, III. iv. rule xv. 2, vol. xiv. p. 50.

⁸ Wilson, *Ordination Sermon* on

1 Cor. iv. 1, *Works, Ang. Cath. Lib.*, vol. iii. p. 436.

⁹ Casaubon, *Resp. ad Epist. Perron.*, 1612, p. 33.

¹ Cosin, *Works*, vol. iv. p. 402.

of the visible, and because the occasions are many and divers which endanger the preventing of so necessary an office by death, in this regard the practice of the primitive Church, alleged by Tertullian, *De Baptismo*, cap. xvii., must not be condemned, whereby baptism, given by him who is only baptized, is not only valid but well done. Though my intent hereby is not to say that it may not be restrained to presbyters and deacons, when the Church is so provided of them that there is no appearance that baptism can be prevented for want of one.² Thorndike's opinion was, however, that the efficacy of baptism depended upon the bishop as its source, and therefore that baptism outside the Church's proper communion was not profitable until reconciliation. 'The gift of the Holy Ghost, which baptism promiseth, dependeth upon the bishop's blessing; because it dependeth upon the unity of the Church. Therefore heretics and schismatics, who, by departing from the unity of the Church, bar themselves of the effect of their baptism, being received with the bishop's blessing, in the primitive Church, were justly thought to recover their title to it.' It was not necessary for validity that 'the ministry of the Church' should have passed upon them when they were baptized.³

Bishop Sparrow, commenting on the English Prayer Book, applies to it the ancient opinion which allowed lay baptism. He sums up the rule of the Church in the sentence, 'He that is baptized himself, may in a case of necessity baptize, if there be no Church near.'

² Thorndike, *Right of the Church in a Christian State*, iii. 23, *Works, Ang. Cath. Lib.*, vol. i. p. 474. *Comp. Covenant of Grace*, xix. 12, vol. iii. p. 341; *Laws of the Church*,

viii. 11, vol. iv. p. 170.

³ *Just Weights and Measures*, xviii. 2, vol. v. p. 202; *Laws of the Church*, x. 31, vol. iv. p. 237.

‘Nor,’ he adds, ‘can I see what can be reasonably objected against this tender and motherly love of the Church to her children, who chooses rather to omit solemnities than hazard souls; which indulgence of hers cannot be interpreted any irreverence or contempt of that venerable sacrament, but a yielding to just necessity (which defends what it constrains), and to God’s own rule, “I will have mercy and not sacrifice.”’⁴

Archbishop Bramhall, arguing upon baptism by heretics, adopts St. Augustine’s dictum that ‘the catholic Church by their baptism doth beget sons and daughters to God.’⁵ ‘We ought to distinguish,’ he says, ‘between the baptism of heretics and heretical baptism: if the baptism itself be good, the administration of it by heretics doth not invalidate it at all; but if the heretic baptize after an heretical form, as without due matter or not in the Name of the Trinity, such baptism is heretical and naught.’⁶

⁴ Sparrow, *Rationale, Of private Works, Ang. Cath. Lib., vol. ii. p. baptism.* 80.

⁵ Bramhall, *Replication to Bishop of Chalcedon, I. iii. 4,* ⁶ *Schism Guarded, I. iv. 8, Works, vol. ii. p. 618.*

CHAPTER XI.

DISSENTERS' BAPTISM.—CENT. XVIII.—XIX.

Dissenters' Baptisms—Convocation of 1703—The nonjurors: Dodwell, Leslie, &c.—Laurence: 'Lay-baptism Invalid'; attacks and replies; Hickes, Brett, &c.—Bingham—Convocation of 1712—Rebaptisms and refusals of burial—Publications—Laurence's promotions—Letters of Waterland and Kelsall—Deacon's 'Devotions'—Later opinion—Scotland: Petrie's Catechism; Skinner's Catechism; Bishop R. Forbes; Scotch registers—Burial disputes: Case at Gloucester; Kemp *v.* Wickes; Opinions of counsel; Mastin *v.* Escott; Appeal to Privy Council; Titchmarsh *v.* Chapman.

THE question of the minister of baptism became one of very serious importance to the Church of England after the Reformation, by reason of the multiplication of dissenting sects. Their preachers administered baptism freely; and, since they were not episcopally ordained, it was lay baptism. But it was a kind of lay baptism hitherto as good as unknown to the catholic Church, very different from the lay baptism allowed by the canons of mediæval councils. In the Church baptism was only bestowed by the laity in circumstances of urgency; in the sects it was habitually given under ordinary conditions of life. In the Church the baptizer was usually in definite communion with the faithful; in the sects he was in formal schism, possibly mingled with heresy. In the Church at any rate the act was done under the sanction of councils and bishops; in the sects it was not only without episcopal sanction,

but more or less in open antagonism to the Church and its episcopate. This was no fanciful flaw, because the whole theory upon which lay baptism rested was that the permission of the Church imparted, in necessity, to the lay person, some sufficient measure of the apostolic commission for the exceptional occasion. There was, therefore, very grave reason for doubt as to the efficacy of the heterogeneous administration of baptism among the dissenting bodies.

The Calvinistic divines, with no very exalted conceptions of the priesthood, did not feel the pressure of this aspect of the subject. Their opposition was to lay baptism within the Church. Their protest was carried on by the high churchmen of the eighteenth century, in the form of opposition to lay baptism outside the orthodox limits of the Church, the baptism given by the preachers of dissenting sects. For the most part they met it by a repudiation of lay baptism in general, and thus it came that the churchmen who had least in common with the puritans were at one with them on the question of the necessity of an apostolic ministry for the valid bestowal of baptism.

This matter of dissenters' baptism did not come up prominently, as such, into controversy, until the commencement of the eighteenth century. In 1703, the clergy of the lower house of Convocation represented to the bishops 'that the unjustifiable use of the form of public baptism in private houses hath lessened the reverence due to that holy office, and in some places hath given opportunity to persons to intrude into the administration of that holy sacrament.' This was more definitely urged in a special address. 'The lower clergy beg leave to represent to your grace and your lordships,

that, among many other encroachments of the dissenting teachers upon the office and rights of the clergy, their frequently presuming to administer the holy sacrament of baptism in private non-licensed houses is one great abuse of very ill consequence, no ways, as we conceive, warranted or countenanced by the Act for exempting protestant subjects dissenting from the Church of England from the penalty of certain laws &c., commonly called the Act of Toleration. We humbly therefore pray that your lordships would be pleased to take this matter into your grave and wise consideration, and endeavour by all proper means to put a stop to such bold intrusions upon the rules and discipline of the Church by law established.'¹ Disputes, however, were then raging between the two houses, and nothing practical was accomplished in this session of Convocation.

A few years after, a considerable controversy was raised on the subject by the nonjurors, who warmly opposed the validity of dissenting baptism. Burnet says that Henry Dodwell 'gave the rise to this conceit.' He had been Camden lecturer of history at Oxford until the Revolution, when he was dismissed from the office for refusing to take the oath of allegiance. He was a layman, 'one of the most learned of the nonjurors,' says Lathbury, 'and indeed one of the most learned men of that, or of any other period.'² He held, says Burnet, 'that none had a right to give the sacraments, but those who were commissioned to it; and these were the apostles, and after them bishops and priests ordained by them; it followed upon this

¹ Cardwell, *Synodalia*, vol. ii. pp. 710, 717.

² Lathbury, *History of the Nonjurors*, p. 141.

that sacraments administered by others were of no value. He pursued these notions so far, that he asserted that the souls of men were naturally mortal, but that the immortalising virtue was conveyed by baptism, given by persons episcopally ordained.³

Dodwell, however, was not the solitary originator of the open repudiation of dissenters' baptism. Charles Leslie had quite as early expressed in print the view that persons baptized by such as had no commission 'received no baptism,' and ought to seek for 'a rebaptization from those who are empowered to administer it;' though he was willing to admit that, in cases of ignorance, God would accept the irregular attempt to baptize.⁴ The opinion was current among all the nonjurors, but it did not at first attract notice.

The member of the nonjuring party who figured most conspicuously in this particular controversy, although not eminent in any other respect, was Roger Laurence. His original rank in life is vaguely indicated by his description as a 'book-keeper,' that is, a merchant's clerk. But he was apparently a clerk of a superior kind, for he had held some post in Spain, and he had received a good education.⁵ The son of dissenting parents, he

³ Burnet, *History of Own Times*, ed. 1753, vol. vi. p. 132.

⁴ Leslie, *Discourse on Water Baptism*, [1696 ?], *Works*, 1832, vol. vii. p. 87.

⁵ Bishop White Kennet speaks of him contemptuously as 'a man bred only to books of accounts, and living properly in the service of a London merchant.' He says he was bred to accounts in Spain, and was 'a book-keeper to Sir J. L.'—*Wisdom of looking backward*,

1715, pp. 221, 265. A contemporary MS. note, in a copy of his work *Lay Baptism Invalid*, says he was 'book-keeper to Mrs. Lethil-lier, in Devonshire Street, London.' His education is shown not only by the character of his writing, but also from evidence that he had studied Euclid, and that he knew Latin. 'You have an advantage,' wrote Dr. Hickes, 'above most others of the laity in understanding Latin.'—*Letter to the Author &c.*,

had been given baptism in his infancy by a minister of their sect. When he grew up, and probably fell among the nonjuring leaders, he became convinced that this baptism was of doubtful efficacy. 'I am very well satisfied,' he wrote afterwards, in 1710, 'that there is but one true baptism, which ought not to be repeated upon those who have received it: I find myself under an impossibility to believe that this one baptism is any other than what Christ Himself instituted just before His ascension into heaven; I reckon an essential part of this institution to be the divine authority of the administrator, as well as the water and the form of administration. I cannot be satisfied that the person who is said to have baptized me ever had this authority; nay, I am fully convinced of the contrary; and also that he was actually in opposition to it; and though his meaning were never so good, yet I cannot think God concurred with such an usurpation, when it was done without any necessity at all, in a Christian country, where truly authorised ministers might have been had with as much, if not greater, ease and speed than he.'⁶ Impressed with this conviction, at his own request, he was baptized hypothetically by the Rev. John Betts, Reader of Christ Church, Newgate Street, 'the 31st of March, 1708, being Wednesday in Passion Week, and therefore an holy-day, in public, immediately after the second lesson at evening prayer, in presence of a great congregation, the Church doors being open.'⁷

p. lxxviii. Bingham, too, says, 'Our author, I am told, understands Latin.'—*Works*, vol. viii. p. 140.

⁶ Laurence, *Lay Baptism Invalid*, 3rd ed. p. 26.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. xii. See Kennet, pp.

88, 246; *Annals of Queen Anne*, vol. xi. p. 377. The baptism was administered without any previous notice to the incumbent, or to the bishop, who seems to have resented the omission (Kennet, p. 228). There

In 1710 Laurence published a treatise, entitled 'Lay Baptism Invalid,' under the disguise of 'A Lay Hand.' It is upon this work that his reputation chiefly rests. He says that the original draft was drawn up merely for the information of his own judgment, and to this may perhaps be attributed its eccentric form. He had a fancy to work out the subject 'in a mathematical method of definition, axiom, and proposition.' The book is therefore a kind of theological imitation of Euclid; and the method, which suits geometrical reasoning, sounds pedantic, and soon breaks down when he tries to apply it to the matter he had in hand. Another fault of his writing is excessive prolixity, though this appears less in his first than in his later productions. He had evidently originally approached the inquiry only by the light of Holy Scripture and reason, and his argument from these is strong and logical. It was probably to others that he subsequently owed most of his historical information. He was intimate with Hickea and Brett, whose learning would readily have supplied this branch of knowledge, if he was deficient in it. Bishop Kennet understood that Hickea had assisted him with the book, and there are passages which suggest Brett's promptings. The historical matter was appended in a 'Preliminary Discourse,' where the mathematical method is not attempted. The essay has transparent faults; but when it is considered that it was the first of its

is no entry of it in the Register of Christ Church, Newgate St., and it has been thought there might be an error as to the Church. But the Salary Book of St. Bartholomew's Hospital shows that Mr. Betts was a Reader at Christ Church in 1708.

The Readers were appointed by the governors of the Hospital, independently of the Vicar. They were, therefore, not exactly in the position of ordinary curates, and this may account for any seeming irregularities.

kind, it must be admitted that Laurence made a valuable collection of facts and references, and that he established a very strong argument from the Biblical point of view. Although his style is not remarkable, it now and then rises to a species of eloquence, as when he appeals to the clergy to break their long silence, and to defend the dignity of their office, and the nature of the sacraments which are inseparably annexed to it. He wrote with the manifest sense of a strong and earnest conviction that he was contending for vital truth.

The book seems to have excited a good deal of attention. It perhaps provoked Bishop Burnet into a violent attack upon those who rejected dissenters' baptism, in a sermon preached in Salisbury cathedral, November 7, 1710. The passage is directly levelled at Dodwell, as 'the corrupter of our faith and Church, who broached this with many other monstrous errors;' but Burnet speaks of the notion as one which was received by others, among whom Laurence was doubtless at the moment one of the most conspicuous.⁸ Bishop Fleetwood, of St. Asaph, wrote an anonymous reply to the book in 1711, in which he successfully argued that the Church of England had not by any formal act declared lay baptism invalid. Bishop Talbot, of Oxford, also took the opportunity of his visitation charge to defend the doctrine of lay baptism, printing afterwards, in an appendix, some extracts from English divines on the same side.

Laurence's natural taste for controversy was immediately whetted. Not content with the rapid call for a second edition of his work before the year 1710 was out, he published 'Sacredotal Powers' in 1711, in

⁸ Burnet, *Two Sermons*, 1710, pp. 22-24.

answer to Burnet; and in 1712, 'Dissenters' Baptisms null and void,' in answer to Fleetwood, although he did not then know the name of his opponent; and also, 'The Bishop of Oxford's Charge considered,' in answer to Talbot. These contained some fresh matter, but to a very considerable extent they were made up of what he had in substance already written in 'Lay Baptism Invalid.' In the same year he brought out a third and enlarged edition of this book.

Others, too, entered into the fray. Hickers wrote a 'Letter to the Author of Lay Baptism Invalid,' which Laurence prefixed to his new editions of the work. Brett also wrote a 'Letter,' in which he specially directed himself against Burnet's sermon. Further essays came from some outside the nonjuring circle, among which Bennet's 'Rights of the Clergy,' published in 1711, is often quoted by the writers of the period, and is still not quite unknown.

Bingham, who was at this time engaged in writing his 'Antiquities,' thought the attacks upon lay baptism so important that he broke off his work, in order to make a separate treatise of what would otherwise have formed a single chapter of his main work. This was published in 1712, under the awkward title of 'A Scholastical History of the practice of the Church in reference to the administration of Baptism by laymen.' His dreary style has not even the compensation of nice discrimination of evidence, scholarly accuracy of translation, or clear chronological arrangement. But his industrious research brought together a mass of information, especially from the writings of the fathers, to which every subsequent student of the subject has been immensely indebted.

Bingham's conclusion was that all lay baptism, Church or dissenting, was valid. His name and his testimony carried weight, and Laurence says that when this book came out the dissenters 'grew extravagantly bold, and even at Oxford carried a child in public procession to one of their meeting houses, to be pretendedly baptized by one of their lay teachers; a thing never seen before in that place by any of its then inhabitants.'⁹ The ostentatious parade indicates the kind of spirit which the controversy had raised.

The bishops now thought it time to interfere. Archbishop Tenison discussed the question with twelve other bishops at an episcopal party on Easter Tuesday, 1712. The upshot was that the archbishop and some of the bishops drew up a resolution asserting the validity of lay baptism. Its original draft ran thus: 'Forasmuch as sundry persons have of late, by their preaching, writing, and discourses, possessed the minds of many people with doubts and scruples about the validity of their baptism, to their great trouble and disquiet, we, the archbishops and bishops whose names are underwritten, have thought it incumbent on us to declare our several opinions, in conformity with the judgment and practice of the catholic Church, and of the Church of England in particular, that such persons as have already been baptized in or with water, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, ought not to be baptized again. And to prevent any such practice in our respective dioceses, we do require our several clergy, that they presume not to baptize any adult person whatsoever, without giving us timely notice of the same, as the rubric requires.'

⁹ Laurence, *Supplement to Lay Baptism Invalid*, p. xvi.

This was communicated to Archbishop Sharp, of York, who sympathised with the matter of the manifesto; but, with the Bishops of Chester, Exeter, and St. David's, whom he consulted, he thought its publication inexpedient, as giving 'too great an encouragement to the dissenters to go on in their way of irregular, uncanonical baptisms.' Therefore he refused to sign it. The Archbishop of Canterbury had to abandon his design of issuing it in the name of all the bishops of England, and he only sought the express concurrence of those of the southern province assembled in Convocation. With a few dissentients, the declaration passed the upper house on May 14, 1712, in the following slightly modified form: 'Forasmuch as sundry persons have of late, by preaching, writing, and discourses, possessed the minds of many people in the communion of our Church, with doubts and scruples about the validity of their baptism, to their great trouble and inquiet, we, the president and bishops, and . . . have thought it incumbent on us to declare, in conformity with the judgment and practice of the catholic Church of Christ, and of the Church of England in particular, that such persons as have already been baptized in or with water, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, though their baptism was irregular for want of a proper administrator, ought not to be baptized again. This we do to prevent, and (to use the words of Archbishop Whitgift¹ on this very point) "not to bring confusion into the Church—for let men take heed that they usurp not an office whereunto they be not called, for God will call them to an

¹ Whitgift, *Defence of Answer, Works*, vol. ii. p. 529.

account for so doing—but to teach a truth, to take a yoke of doubtfulness from men's consciences, and to resist an error not differing much from Donatism and anabaptism.”’

This was sent down to the lower house on the same day. A debate took place, with the result that the house declined to consider the question. The following answer was sent up to the bishops: ‘The lower house, having on May 14th received from your lordships a paper relating to the validity of baptism administered by unauthorised persons, did enter into a debate thereupon, and thought it no ways proper to take into consideration the matter of that paper during the sitting of this Convocation; and have resolved to lay before your lordships some of the reasons for which they declined entering into the consideration of the same paper. First, because the validity of such baptism is a point which the catholic Church, and the Church of England in particular, hath hitherto avoided to determine by any synodical declaration. Secondly, because the inconveniences manifestly attending such a determination would in their humble opinion far outweigh the convenience proposed by it; especially at a time when the divine authority of the Christian priesthood is so openly struck at by some, and the advantage of an episcopal mission, derived by an undoubted succession from the apostles, is so much undervalued by others. But thirdly, were it thought proper synodically to consider and determine this matter, yet they humbly conceive that nothing of this kind ought to be decided but in a full assembly of the clergy, after due notice given to all their members to attend and afford their assistance on so important an occasion.’ By this wise

reply the lower house averted the publication of a hasty decision.²

Meanwhile, the Earl of Oxford, then lord high treasurer, who had himself been brought up among dissenters, had suggested to the archbishop in conversation, on May 9, that the Queen should put out a letter to check the disturbances raised about lay baptism. Tenison, however, did not encourage the idea. It was open to manifest objections, and Lord Oxford does not seem to have proceeded with it further.³

The controversy went on, and began to take practical shapes. In 1713, or thereabouts, a dissenter, Benjamin Read by name, came over from dissent to the Church, and was baptized conditionally by Mr. Jenkinson, a clergyman, at Heavitree, near Exeter. Two other clergymen, Mr. King and Mr. Walker, who had been instrumental in his conversion, acted as sponsors. A little battle of pamphlets ensued, of no particular importance, except as illustrating the temper of the times.⁴ Kennet says the bishop was the original instigator of the baptism.⁵ This is scarcely likely, for it seems that Blackall had probably himself been baptised by a dissenter; he ordained one who had been a dissenting minister, without rebaptism; and in a case where a layman, named Butler Lacy, had been ministering as a priest, with sham orders, he had given no directions for rebaptizing the children whom he had baptized.⁶ Yet Laurence speaks of ‘the case at Exeter,’

² Kennet, *Wisdom of looking backward*, pp. 237, 238; Cardwell, *Synodalia*, vol. ii. pp. 770-773; *Life of Sharp*, by his son, ed. Newcome, 1825, vol. i. pp. 369-376.

³ *Life of Sharp*, vol. i. p. 377.

⁴ *A Caveat &c.*; Mr. Read's *Reply*; Stogden's *Defence*, &c. See note A at end of chapter, p. 261.

⁵ Kennet, *Wisdom &c.*, p. 311.

⁶ *Caveat*, p. 28; *Defence of Caveat*, pp. 50, 51.

as evidence that the bishop rejected unauthorised baptism,⁷ and it would appear that he must have given at least his silent consent to what the clergymen had done.

Another acrimonious pamphlet battle was fought over a similar case of rebaptism of two ladies in Manchester, in 1714.⁸ The personal scurrility displayed shows how warm was the feeling. The printed essays no doubt expressed what was being said and thought all over the country.

A few of the clergy began now to refuse the Church's burial office, where persons had only been baptized by dissenters. At Derby this led to a controversy between some churchmen and the dissenters.⁹ It does not seem, however, that there was any general agreement to adopt this system of repudiating nonconformist baptism.

Probably a great number of the pamphlets which were published have permanently disappeared. Of those which remain, most are of no theological value. The principal controversialists, however, contributed a few more treatises of better stuff, although not equal to their first productions. Bingham's *Scholastical History* drew a somewhat irritated reply from Laurence in 1713, called 'The Second Part of Lay Baptism Invalid.' Brett, also, answered him in a long and careful pamphlet, entitled 'An Inquiry into the Judgment and Practice of the Primitive Church.' Bingham added a second part to his *Scholastical History* in 1714, specially devoted

⁷ Laurence, *Supplement*, p. vi. Comp. Bingham, *Canon of Council of Nice*, *Works*, vol. viii. p. 447.

⁸ *Donatus Redivivus*, &c. See

note A at end of chapter, p. 262.

⁹ Kennet, p. 343. See note A, on p. 261.

to an attempt to prove that heresy deleted orders, in opposition to Brett. He added an annoyed appendix against Laurence, who retorted in 'A Supplement to Lay Baptism Invalid,' in 1714. In the same year Brett successfully refuted Bingham's contention about delible orders, in 'A further Inquiry.' Bingham had taken indefensible ground in the dispute, and on that point he was defeated. 'Neither his fine parts nor voluminous reading,' says Waterland, comparing him with Laurence, 'could support him against an adversary, who in learning certainly, not to say in abilities, is far inferior to him.'¹ Bingham did not, however, admit that he was vanquished, and returned to the charge in 1715, with 'A Dissertation on the eighth Canon of the Council of Nice.' It is of so little value, that nobody seems to have thought it worth a reply. The contest had gone off, and spent itself, on a subsidiary point. Laurence published a fourth edition of his earliest and best work, in 1723, with a few trifling corrections. That and Bingham's first essay are the two books of permanent importance which stand out from the mass of literature that had been printed.

For his part in the controversy Laurence received some complimentary acknowledgments. Through the influence of his brother nonjuror, Charles Wheatly, the commentator on the Prayer Book, he was given an honorary degree of M.A., at Oxford, in 1713, 'for his service to the Church,'—'without education or exercise,' as Bishop White Kennet captiously notes.² Later on, he was consecrated a bishop by the Scotch nonjuring

¹ Waterland, *Works*, vol. vi. p. 233.

History of the Nonjurors, p. 383, note. MS. note in second-hand copy of *Lay Baptism Invalid*.

² Kennet, pp. 284, 285; Lathbury,

Bishop Campbell. It was Campbell's individual act; and, being regarded by some as uncanonical, it contributed to the dissensions which were then dividing the nonjuring party.³ Laurence seems to have played no remarkable part as a bishop, and he is now exclusively known from his share in the baptism disputes.

The letters of Waterland and Kelsall are another valuable contribution to the discussion, written at this time, though not printed till Bishop Van Mildert included them in his edition of Waterland's Works in 1823. They are addressed to 'the Rev. Mr. P——, Rector of L——,' conjectured to be Mr. Pyle, of Lym, in Norfolk. They grew out of a conversation between him and another with the Rev. Edward Kelsall, after which Mr. P. wrote to ask Waterland's opinion upon lay baptism. Waterland replied, October 29, 1713, that he had originally accepted its validity, but that later reflection had changed his view. He gives his grounds under the three heads of Scripture, antiquity, and reason. Scripture, he maintains, confines the administration to the clergy. He proves this by the terms of the commission to the apostles; and he has no difficulty in showing that any argument which allows lay baptism could as logically allow lay administration of other priestly offices. Antiquity, the private theory of Tertullian excepted, he considers to be against lay baptism, the acceptance of heretical and schismatical baptisms being no proof to the contrary, since these were bestowed by ordained priests, not by the laity. The argument from reason is only a brief reply to one or two false conclusions.

Mr. P. sent on this letter to Kelsall, who wrote a

³ Lathbury, p. 381.

long and scholarly reply, dated May 12, 1714. He combats all three of Waterland's positions, beginning with reason, and then proceeding to Scripture and antiquity. The essay puts the case for lay baptism as well perhaps as it has ever been put by anyone. The strength of his plea lay in the evidence of history. He admits that reason might seem at first sight to be on Waterland's side, and from Scripture he has very little to adduce. It is only by importing historical considerations into his treatment of these two points that he is able to make anything of them. The value of the letter is therefore mainly in its patristic references. Kelsall adds a less important section on the teaching of the English formularies.

Waterland prepared an elaborate answer. It is undated, but evidently it was the result of considerable time and study. Adhering to his original plan, and insisting upon basing the inquiry first upon Scripture and not upon reason, he is easily able to make good his contention that the commission to baptize in the Bible belongs to the clergy. In his more difficult task of dealing with Kelsall's quotations from the fathers, he has recourse to the theory that those who favoured lay baptism were only expressing their own private opinion, and were not speaking on behalf of the Church. He boldly combats St. Augustine's views as unsound. His section on the argument from reason is a reply to the reasoning of Kelsall, and here the exigencies of controversy led Waterland into taking up some doubtful positions. Concluding with a brief examination of the doctrine of the Church of England, he says that her divines had been on the side of lay baptism, but that her principles should have led to a contrary use.

The dispute on both sides was conducted with better temper, and with closer and fairer argument, than in any of the printed essays of the day on the same subject. In spite of Waterland's assertion that his papers were 'designed only for private use,' it is impossible to suppose that either he or Kelsall would have written such careful and finished treatises, unless they had contemplated the probability of ultimate publication. They remained, however, unknown, until a copy of the originals was found in Oxford, the first letter of Waterland and the letter of Kelsall in the library of Christ Church, and Waterland's second letter in that of St. John's College. The discovery was important, for they form a very notable addition to the literature of the subject.⁴

The fact that the attack on lay baptism had come chiefly from the nonjurors was not perhaps altogether in favour of the general acceptance of their opinion, especially when their numbers and influence declined. Moreover the section to which Laurence belonged was that of the most rigid 'usagers,' who became isolated even from the main body of their own party. One of this small set, Thomas Deacon, whom Campbell and Laurence consecrated bishop in about 1733, brought out a new version of the baptismal office in 1734. In this the sentence concerning the 'essentials' of baptism, which occurs in the English book only before the interrogatories as to the matter and words, was dropped out altogether, so that all four questions stood on

⁴ See, for an account of the letters, Van Mildert's *Review of Waterland's Life and Writings, Works of Waterland*, vol. i. pp. 224-9. The letters are printed in vol. vi.

An appreciative sketch of much of Waterland's argument is contained in the Bishop of Argyll's *Charge to his Clergy*, Aug. 22, 1888, pp. 15-28.

exactly the same ground. That the intention was to remove the inference that the minister was not an essential, was made clear by an addition to the rubric about conditional baptism. In Deacon's book this ran: 'If they who bring the infant to the Church do make such uncertain answers to the priest's questions as that it cannot appear that a lawful priest or deacon did baptize the child with water, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (which are essential parts of baptism), then let the priest baptize it,' &c.⁵ Deacon's offices, though used by his own adherents, never had a very wide acceptance.

A few isolated instances occurred from time to time, where dissenting baptism was rejected, but probably they were exceptional.

John Wesley, in the early days of his ministry, when he was at Lincoln College, Oxford, that is, between 1729 and 1735, made a convert of a Presbyterian, who had scruples about the baptism which he had received from a minister of his sect. Wesley applied to the bishop, Dr. Potter, for instructions, and by his direction baptized the man hypothetically in Lincoln College Chapel.⁶

In 1751, a Mr. Castleman, Vicar of South Petherton, Somerset, brought a pamphlet attack upon himself for baptizing a boy and girl, who had received Presbyterian baptism in their infancy.⁷

On the other hand, while Warburton was Bishop of Gloucester (1760-1779), a clergyman sought his direction as to whether he should rebaptize some who had

⁵ *A Compleat Collection of Devotions*, 1734, pp. 144, 151.

bury, by Philalethes, 1738, p. 56.

⁷ *Letter to Mr. Castleman*, 1751.

⁶ *Letter to Archbishop of Canter-*

received baptism from a layman who pretended to be in holy orders, and the bishop said he was on no account to do so.⁸

Opinions still differed. In 1799 a foreign missionary applied to the governing body of the Society for the Conversion of Negroes, of which Bishop Porteus, of London, was president, to know how he should treat those who had been baptized by dissenters. The answer they sent was as follows: 'With regard to what you mention relative to those negroes who are baptized by the Methodists, the society are of opinion that if they are not baptized by ministers of the established Church, you should baptize them again.'⁹

Yet the ordinary practice must have been to accept dissenting baptism, or the records of its repudiation would not be so scarce and fragmentary as they are. The low tone of the age with reference to sacraments and discipline may well account for much indifference on the subject. But, where there was anxiety to take a strict line, the clergy found themselves confronted by a problem in dissenting baptism, which no precedents exactly met, and without any certain guidance at hand in the Prayer Book, since its revision at the Hampton Court conference. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at if little decided action was taken.

In Scotland, the treatment of the question was quite different, in this period, from its treatment in England. Very definite principles were held there, and acted upon. This was partly owing to the fact that the

⁸ *Judgment by Sir J. Nicholl in Kemp v. Wickes*, p. 39.

⁹ *Remarks upon a Report of the Judgment of Sir J. Nicholl*, p. 66.

Scottish Church became so closely allied with the non-jurors that nonjuring opinions prevailed.

At first, however, as the eighteenth century opened, the Church, hunted and persecuted, was unable effectually to minister to the people. In this dire extremity, when priests were hard to obtain, the only resource that was often possible was baptism by laymen. The bishops did the best they could under the circumstances, by partially sanctioning it for the present distress. In some instances lay catechists were licensed to read the Church prayers; and Mr. Farquhar Smith, a student of this period of Scottish history in the Highlands, says: 'In cases of necessity, they were also (as I could prove from traditions in my own family) authorised by the bishop to baptize children.'¹

After a while there came a short temporary relief in Queen Anne's reign. With the increase of clergy, extraordinary measures were withdrawn, and the Scottish Church set itself against lay baptism. Possibly in extreme necessity it was still resorted to. In the Register of Muthill there is an entry, in 1734, of a baptism 'by Mr. Lauder,' who was 'schoolmaster and sessions clerk of the parish.' There are instances at this period in which the schoolmaster was in holy orders, and it is not certain that Lauder was a layman. Even if he was, the entry is of little weight as evidence of Church opinion, for it is in his own handwriting, inserted perhaps without the sanction of Mr. Erskine, the incumbent, with whom his relations were apparently strained. Mr. Erskine notes in the register, 'Mr. Lauder took money for inserting the names, . . . but I discouraged the practice as a hardship on the people,

¹ Craven, *Journals of Bishop Forbes*, p. 101.

who had now the legal [Presbyterian] register to pay for.' It is, also, the only case of the kind in the whole register.²

At any rate when baptism was administered by Presbyterians, Scotch clergy often were wont to reject it. Their very persecution was in some respects a help towards maintaining a stricter discipline than had been found possible in England. This discipline usually extended to the denial of the ordinary validity of lay baptism, and to the rebaptism of Presbyterians as a condition of reception into the Church.

The catechetical teaching of the eighteenth century was very distinct upon the point, and doubtless it is an indication of the oral teaching of the clergy. Thus, in 'A short Explanation of the Catechism, in a Dialogue between a Countryman and his own Paroch Minister, by T. M., a suffering Presbyter of the Church of Scotland,' published at Edinburgh in 1712, there is a passage on the subject :

'C. I see now that it is a sad mistake to think it indifferent whether we baptize our child by an episcopal minister or by a Presbyterian, seeing there is the greatest reason to doubt of the validity of their administration in sacred things.

'M. I am glad you have understood this matter so rightly ; for it is plain that all commissions are exclusive ; and seeing our Blessed Saviour hath given commission only to His apostles, and the bishops as their successors, to officiate in all ministerial administrations, it necessarily follows that none have power to officiate in sacred things but such as have episcopal ordination.'³

² Hallen, *Register of Muthill*, pp. x., 112, 113 ; Information from Rev.

J. Leslie, Incumbent of Muthill.

³ *Short Explanation, &c.* p. 16.

The 'Forty-lesson Catechism' of Bishop George Innes, first printed in 1765, was abridged by Bishop Petrie of Moray (1777-1787), and adopted by Bishop Jolly, who was consecrated to the same see in 1796. This shorter 'Nine-lesson Catechism' was extensively used in Scotland in the early part of this century, and not wholly disused in recent years. In it there occurs the following :

'Q. Is it necessary that baptism be performed by the bishop, or by a clergyman ordained by him, and duly authorised for that purpose ?

'A. Yes ; for none can baptize without a commission from Jesus Christ ; and it was to the apostles and their successors and substitutes that Christ gave the commission.

'Q. But may not any Christian baptize in case of necessity ?

'A. No ; because he that baptizes must have authority to represent God, and act and promise in His Name ; and none can have this authority but those that are commissioned by Christ, as mentioned in the preceding question.'⁴

Another 'Catechism to be learned by children before they are confirmed by the bishop' says the same thing at greater length. It was put forth in conformity with a resolution of the episcopal synod, at Stonehaven, on September 20, 1792, and is described as 'For the use of the Scotch Episcopal Church.' Bishop John Skinner, of Aberdeen, was its author ; and editions of

⁴ *The Church Catechism: to which are added some instructions proper for Young Persons before they are confirmed*, Lesson iii., ed. 1848 (Aberdeen), p. 12. See

Rev. G. H. Forbes' edition, 1854 Dr. Walker's *Memoir of Bishop Jolly* ; and *Scottish Guardian*, Oct. 19, 1888, p. 521.

it were published in 1796, 1804, and 1841. The passage on baptism is as follows :

‘Q. How is it that we are first entered into this body, and made members of Christ?

‘A. It is by the sacrament of baptism, according to the commission which our Lord gave His apostles “to make disciples to Him of all nations, by baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Matt. xxviii. 19.

‘Q. What do you infer from this commission given by Christ to the apostles, and to them only?

‘A. I think it is evident that they, and none but they, were invested by Him with power to administer the sacrament of baptism.

‘Q. But had not these apostles proper authority to transmit this power to others, for the benefit of His Church?

‘A. Yes; it was for this purpose that our Lord sent them, even as He was sent, and promised to be with them, and the mission derived from them, to the end of the world.

‘Q. Who then are the persons who at this time have the regular commission to minister in holy things?

‘A. None have a regular commission to minister in holy things, or to be stewards of the mysteries of God, but such as derive their mission or stewardship from the apostles.

‘Q. Is the efficacy ascribed to these mysteries naturally inherent in them, or supernaturally conveyed to them?

‘A. It is not to be supposed that baptizing with water, or laying on of hands, or administering bread and wine, can have any spiritual efficacy but what is

conveyed to them, in a supernatural way, and by virtue of Christ's institution.

'Q. And is it not equally evident, that no man can have a natural right to celebrate these mysteries, or dispense the benefits of them?

'A. It is certain that no man can have any right to do so but what is likewise derived from the institution, and regularly handed down from those to whom the original grant was given.

'Q. On what then depends the validity of these ministrations?

'A. It does not depend on the virtues and qualifications of the minister, but on his power and authority. Be he ever so holy, the sacraments he administers derive no additional value from his holiness; and be he ever so unworthy, the efficacy of them cannot be hurt by his unworthiness.

'Q. What do you learn from this view of the institutions of the Gospel?

'A. I learn this, that the authority of the administrator being a matter of so great importance, and so essential to the efficacy of the Christian sacraments, it ought to be always attended to, in celebrating these mysteries of our holy religion.'⁵

Although the Presbyterians are not mentioned by name in these catechisms, it is of course against them that the teaching is especially directed. Nor was it a mere matter of theory. Whether they always insisted on it or not, the bishops and clergy did often actually baptize those who came over from Presbyterianism.

The journals of Bishop Robert Forbes contain

⁵ *Catechism*, ed. 1804, p. 64. See Dr. Walker's *John Skinner, Bishop of Aberdeen*, p. 174, for an account of this Catechism.

several instances of this. While still a priest at Leith, he records, '1740, June 8th (1st Sunday after Trinity), Mr. John Skinner came to my room after vespers, and, at his own desire, received baptism from me, after that he had declared that he was not satisfied with the sprinkling of a layman, a Presbyterian teacher, he had received in his infancy, and had adduced several weighty arguments for this his conduct.'⁶ Later, after he had in 1762 been consecrated Bishop of Orkney and Caithness, he enters in his diary, February 4, 1767, 'Wednesday, I baptized Mr. Allan Cameron, from Lochaber, a person of riper years, who, in his infancy, had been sprinkled by an unauthorised holder forth.'⁷ This Mr. Cameron was afterwards ordained, and was a zealous priest in Ross-shire. His journals also contain the narrative of two Highland confirmation tours, in 1762 and 1770. In both he notes several adult baptisms, of which nearly all, if not all, must have been rebaptisms of those baptized in Presbyterianism. The mention of these abounds especially in the account of his visitation of the diocese of Argyll during his second tour, and at the end he has this entry, 'Baptized in all, 277, of whom two only lately born, and not sprinkled irregularly.'⁸

Other evidence lies in the baptismal registers of Scotch Churches. Thus, at Arradoul, on the Moray Firth, in the twenty-two years between 1757 and 1779, ninety-one adult baptisms are registered, and it may be certainly presumed that the majority of these were rebaptisms of Presbyterians. In one case the register records the baptism of a child who had been 'sprinkled

⁶ Craven, *Journals of the Episcopal Visitations of the Rt. Rev. Robert Forbes, with a Memoir*, p. 11.

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 127.

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 323. See also pp. 201, 234, 254, 287, 289, 290, 294, 296, 304, 311, 314, 316.

only before by one Chalmers.’⁹ The register of the parish of Muthill, in Perthshire, contains several entries, at the close of last century, of the baptism of children and adults, ‘who had been only sprinkled before in the schism.’¹ In most cases they were baptized ‘privately.’ The Rev. Alexander Cruickshank was then incumbent, and for long after. He was succeeded in 1834 by the Rev. Alexander Lendrum, and twelve similar entries occur during his incumbency.² Both priests came from Folla-Rule, Bishop Petrie’s former parish.

Mr. Lendrum’s own case is particularly interesting. ‘I was,’ he says, ‘in my infancy baptized by a Presbyterian minister, but when I was grown up and paid my first or second visit to my great uncle, the incumbent of Muthill, he drew my attention to the matter, which resulted in my being baptized by him then and there. Some years after, when I was then a priest, the Bishop of St. Andrew’s, Dr. Torry, came to confirm, and I stated my case to him, that I was confirmed after my invalid baptism, but it could be no valid confirmation. I therefore asked him to confirm me truly, to which he at once assented, and did it privately in my own house, there being present only three or four persons.’ At the time of his ordination, in 1832, Mr. Lendrum says, ‘the opinion was very general in Scotland that none had the power to baptize but those having the divine commission.’ The nonjuring tradition had subsisted, and Laurence’s books still influenced the minds of the clergy and bishops. ‘As to others,’ Mr. Lendrum

⁹ See a paper on the Recent History of the Church in Rathven, *Scottish Guardian*, July 23, 1886.

¹ 1783, one; 1784, one; 1787, six; 1793, three. Hallen, *Tran-*

script of the Register of Baptisms, Muthill, Perthshire, from 1697–1847, pp. 148, 151, 154.

² 1836, seven; 1839, three; 1845, two. *Ibid.* pp. 169, 171, 174.

writes, 'I cannot speak, but I certainly did not baptize less than a hundred, who "had only been sprinkled in the schism," in the thirty years I worked in Scotland.'³

Meanwhile, after an interval during which the effects of the nonjurors' controversy had died out in England, the subject was revived in a new shape, by some test cases in the law courts, with regard to the right of those baptized by dissenting ministers to the burial service of the Church of England.

Some time, about the beginning of this century, a clergyman was brought before the Bishop's Consistorial Court at Gloucester, for refusing to bury a child with the Church's rites, because it had been baptized by a dissenting minister. The court upheld the clergyman's conduct.⁴

A few years after, an action was brought in the Court of Arches, by a Mr. Kemp, against the Rev. John Wight Wickes, Rector of Wardley-cum-Belton, in Leicestershire, for refusing, in August 1808, to use the Church office for the burial of Hannah Swingler, a child who had been baptized by a Calvinistic Independent minister. Mr. Wickes' defence appears to have been that the Prayer Book rubrics contemplate a 'lawful minister;' that a dissenting preacher is not a 'lawful minister' within the terms of the rubric; therefore, that a person baptized by such an one is 'unbaptized' in the Prayer Book sense; and consequently, by the rubric of the Burial Office, the Church's service might not be used. Sir John Nicholl, official principal of the Arches

³ Rev. A. Lendrum, Rector of Blatherwycke, Northants, to Rev. W. Elwin, March 4, 1889.

⁴ Hutton, *Remarks upon a late decision*, 1811, p. 22.

Court, gave judgment, December 11, 1809. He ruled that 'baptized' meant baptized by anybody whatsoever, irrespective of ministerial qualifications. Not, however, content with confining himself to a mere legal view, he embarked on an examination of the whole question of lay baptism. He had collected some miscellaneous and discursive scraps of evidence on the subject, and upon these imperfect materials he decided for its validity. Finally, he sought to strengthen his case by maintaining that under the State Toleration Acts a dissenting minister had become more than a layman, and was entitled to be considered a 'lawful minister' in the Prayer Book sense.⁵

Churchmen felt that Nicholl's treatment of the subject was eminently unsatisfactory, and his judgment elicited a number of warm attacks, probably more on account of the claim it put out for dissenting ministers, than on account of its verdict as to lay baptism. The *Anti-Jacobin Review* wrote of it as 'one of the most erroneous judgments ever pronounced by a man exercising judicial functions, and supported by a train of reasoning the most frivolous, shallow, weak and inconclusive.' After regretting that there was to be no appeal, the article expressed a hope that the clergy would 'not be deterred from doing their duty.'⁶ Dr. Hutton, Vicar of Sutterton, in a pamphlet on the judgment, printed in the following year, 1811, speaks of dissatisfaction and discontent as being generally prevalent among the clergy.⁷ Nor was the feeling confined to those not in

⁵ *Judgment by Sir J. Nicholl*, by Gurney, 1810. Also Phillimore's *Reports of Cases, &c.*, 1827, vol. iii. pp. 264-306.

⁶ *Anti-Jacobin*, Feb. 1811, vol. xxxviii. pp. 191, 207.

⁷ Hutton, *Remarks on a late decision*, p. 21.

high place. Spencer Madan, Bishop of Peterborough, in whose diocese the case occurred, allowed Dr. Hutton to dedicate his tract to him 'by permission;' and Bishop Burgess, of St. David's, addressed his clergy against the judgment,⁸ as well as publishing some 'Reflections' upon it anonymously. Lord Brougham, in a legal judgment at a later time, remarked on the 'indecorous terms' in which it had 'been assailed by some reverend persons.'⁹

Lord Brougham's remark probably referred especially to the two chief pamphlets directed against Sir John Nicholl's decision—the anonymous one by Bishop Burgess, and a still longer one by Archdeacon Daubeny with his name attached, both published in 1811. These essays criticised the judgment with some severity and sound argument. Neither writer absolutely denied the validity of lay baptism. Their contention was that dissenters' baptism did not fall under the *Prayer Book* meaning of 'baptized.' They insisted that the word must be understood there in a technical sense. This technical sense could only be, 'baptized by a lawful minister,' since the Church of England officially recognises no other kind of baptism in her formularies.¹ And

⁸ *Quarterly Review*, vol. vii. p. 201. Another, who in a few years was to be a bishop, Richard Mant, would certainly have agreed with them, though he seems to have taken no open part in the discussion. Writing of baptism, he says, 'This ministration belongs to no other persons than those who are sent with Christ's commission.' He admits that the Church of England had permitted some laxity for a time, but 'subsequently,' he says, 'fol-

lowing the judgment and example of the early Church, she discerned her error, and retraced her steps.'—*The Church and her Ministrations*, 1838, p. 244.

⁹ *Judgment of Judicial Committee in Escott against Mastin*, p. 15.

¹ Daubeny, *Examination of the Judgment*, pp. 23, 25; Burgess, *Reflections on the Judgment*, pp. iv., 13, 30.

a dissenting minister, they argued, could not be a 'lawful minister,' in the Prayer Book meaning of the phrase. Even the Toleration Acts only removed disabilities from dissenters, and did not profess to give them an ecclesiastical status.² Both further pointed out that there was no true parallel between ordinary baptism by dissenters, and the baptism by lay churchmen, in necessity, which had been permitted in mediæval times.³

Burgess, while disputing the fairness of the judgment, accepted it as authoritative for the time, until it should be overturned. He therefore advised the clergy to give temporary adhesion to it.⁴ Afterwards, when he was translated to Salisbury, he appended a note to his primary charge, when it was printed in 1826, suggesting that, though a clergyman might 'conscientiously submit to the law so interpreted by an ecclesiastical judge,' he might 'not less conscientiously refuse to read the service, if he is prepared to risk the expense of prosecution, and to make the ultimate appeal.'⁵ Some of the clergy exposed themselves to this chance of prosecution, for the Rev. Walter Blunt, in a pamphlet printed in 1840, states that, to his personal knowledge, Nicholl's judgment had been ignored in eight different dioceses.⁶ An article in the *Christian Observer*, April, 1840, says that the matter had been stirred in scores and even hundreds of cases; but that, under threat of legal proceedings, clergymen had as a rule consulted their lawyers, and at their recommendation had come

² Daubeny, p. 102; Burgess, pp. 63, 64.

³ Daubeny, p. 51; Burgess, p. 21. Daubeny's pamphlet was acrimoniously reviewed in the *Quarterly Review*, March, 1812.

⁴ Burgess, p. 1.

⁵ Burgess, *Charge*, Salisbury, 1826, p. 37 note.

⁶ Blunt, *Dissenters' Baptisms and Church Burials*, p. 11.

to some compromise before the matter was driven to extremities.⁷

In the year 1840, under the advice of the Bishop of Exeter, the Rev. R. Tripp and the Rev. J. Wilkinson, Exeter clergy, each refused to bury a child baptized by a Unitarian minister in the Name of the Blessed Trinity. The Unitarians took the opinion of Sir John Campbell, attorney general, and of Dr. Addams. Both agreed that the refusal was illegal; but no prosecution followed, for the dissenters were content with Mr. Wilkinson's admission that he had acted illegally, on receipt of the counsel's opinion.⁸

The question, however, soon came again into court. In December, 1839, the Rev. T. S. Escott, Vicar of Gedney, in Lincolnshire, had refused to allow the Church rites of burial to Elizabeth Ann Cliff, a child who had been baptized by a Wesleyan minister, with water, in the Name of the Trinity. Being threatened with prosecution, the opinion of Dr. Nicholl, Mr. Starkie, and Mr. Matthews, as counsel, was taken. Guided by the case of *Kemp v. Wickes*, they advised Escott that his action had been illegal.⁹ Encouraged by lawyers' opinions, Mr. Mastin, a farmer and Wesleyan class teacher, prosecuted him in the Arches Court. Sir Herbert Jenner, afterwards Jenner-Fust, was now official principal; Sir John Dodson, Queen's advocate, appeared as leading counsel for Mastin, and Dr. Phillimore for Escott. Both they and their juniors took immense pains with the case, and it was argued at very considerable length.

⁷ *Christian Observer*, vol. xl. p. 407-409.
221.

⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 409-411.

⁸ *Ibid.* July, 1840, vol. xl. pp.

The pleadings did not follow precisely the lines taken in *Kemp v. Wickes*. Nicholl had indulged in a disquisition on the general question of the validity of lay baptism, but this had not been the special point of the counsel. Now, on both sides, the case was argued entirely on this basis. Mastin's counsel laid no claim for a ministerial qualification on behalf of the Wesleyan preacher, and Escott's counsel laid but little stress on his schismatical position. The question discussed was almost exclusively whether the Church of England accepted lay baptism. Jenner gave judgment on May 8, 1841, in a long dissertation, showing much careful and independent study. His argument was briefly, that lay baptism had 1200 years' use in its favour, that such long usage could only be rescinded by a clear prohibition, that the withdrawal of its express sanction in the Prayer Book could not be construed into such formal prohibition, and that it must therefore be held as still valid in the English communion. Accordingly, he condemned Escott to three months' suspension, with costs.¹

That the decision would follow the precedent of *Kemp v. Wickes* was almost a foregone conclusion, in the Arches Court, in spite of the case having been argued on somewhat different grounds. It was hoped, however, to reverse it, on appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The appeal was heard by Lord Wynford, Lord Brougham, Justice Erskine and Dr. Lushington, 'an ex-lord chancellor, an ex-lord chief justice of the court of common pleas, a puisne judge of the same court, and the judge of the high court of admiralty, four men,' said Bishop Phillpotts,

¹ Curteis, *Full Report of Mastin v. Escott*.

‘of high character, and very high attainments, but not exactly such as any man in the realm would have selected to ventilate the questions which they, whether necessarily or unnecessarily, connected with the point they had to decide.’² As might be expected, they did not show themselves particularly at home in the theological matters it raised, and the judgment, delivered by Lord Brougham, on July 2, 1842, contributed nothing of importance to the discussion of the subject on its own merits. It upheld the decision of the Arches Court, Lord Brougham a little testily resenting that it should ever have been disputed.³

The Bishop of Exeter, entirely differing from these decisions, devoted a considerable part of his charge in 1842 to a consideration of the subject, and a few small publications had besides appeared on the Church side. The judgment was not popular with the clergy, of course; not so much because of its acceptance of lay baptism, as because of the right it gave to dissenters to claim Church ministrations at their hands. ‘The clergy generally,’ wrote Maskell, shortly after, ‘have silently (perhaps some sullenly?) acquiesced; but it would be absurd to say that they have been convinced.’⁴

One other plea remained, which was tried before the question was allowed to rest in the law courts. The Wesleyan minister, as Bishop Phillpotts pointed out, had not been brought before the court as either a schismatic or a heretic, and therefore it had not been able to consider him as such.⁵ The whole argument had

² Phillpotts, *Charge to Clergy of Diocese of Exeter*, 1842, p. 38.

³ *Judgment of the Judicial Committee in Escott against Mastin*, 1842, reprinted in Stephens, *Prac-*

tical Treatise of the Laws relating to the Clergy, 1848, vol. i.

⁴ Maskell, *Holy Baptism*, 2nd ed., p. 250.

⁵ Phillpotts, *Charge*, 1842, p. 39.

been about lay baptism, apart from any considerations of heresy or schism to aggravate it. A third case was, therefore, brought into the Arches Court, in 1844, again before Sir H. Jenner-Fust, to try whether the law would disqualify dissenters' baptism on the charge of heresy and schism. The action was brought by one Titchmarsh against the Rev. W. H. Chapman, for refusing the Church's offices of burial to an infant baptized by an Independent minister. Chapman pleaded that the baptism was heretical and schismatical, and therefore void. The question turned partly upon whether a dissenter was *ipso facto* 'excommunicate,' by his own act of separation from the Church. Here the court rightly decided that formal excommunication requires a declaratory sentence, and cannot be tacitly assumed without it. Consequently a dissenter could not be said in a strict technical sense to be 'excommunicate.' Further, the judgment laid down that 'both lay and heretical baptism are irregular, and contrary to the order of the Church; but both are valid,' for the purposes of burial. The judge dwelt particularly on the expression, 'lawfully and sufficiently baptized,' in the rubric of the office for private baptism, and said that in his own decision he used the word 'sufficiently' advisedly. 'To what extent the sufficiency goes,' he added, 'is not for this court to determine; whether it does, or does not, confer spiritual grace the court gives no opinion.'⁶

So far as the question of burial is concerned, perhaps there is no cause for anyone to quarrel with the result of these decisions, particularly expressed with the qualifications of Sir H. Jenner-Fust's last judgment. Anomalous as it is that those who have lived outside

⁶ Stephens, *Practical Treatise, &c.* vol. i. pp. 123-125.

the visible communion of the catholic Church should be committed to the grave with the same office as her faithful children, it is an anomaly inherent in the lack of discipline which characterises the whole of the modern life of the Church of England. Until the ancient discipline can be restored in more ways than this, it is possibly better to acquiesce in allowing dissenters this measure of the Church's ministrations at the grave, than to attempt to enforce a discipline in death, out of proportion to that which is exercised in life. Until the Church sees her way to put into practice her power of excommunication, she must be content to permit much which she cannot altogether approve.

The doctrinal point of the spiritual efficacy of lay or of dissenting baptism is of course absolutely unaffected by these cases in the law courts. Counsel discussed it freely, and the judges gave their opinions somewhat dogmatically, but it lay outside, not only of their proper jurisdiction, but also of the question which they were called upon to decide. Nor can it be said that they contributed any particularly valuable assistance towards the solution of the difficulties surrounding the controversy as to dissenters' baptism.

NOTES TO CHAPTER XI.

A.—*Publications on the Controversy of the eighteenth century.*

Lay-Baptism Invalid. An Essay to prove that such baptism is null and void, when administered in opposition to the Divine right of the apostolical succession. Occasioned chiefly by the anti-episcopal usurpations of our English dissenting teachers. By a Lay-Hand [R. Laurence]. London, 1710.

Lay-Baptism Invalid, &c. Second edition. Corrected and enlarged, with an appendix. To which is prefixed a Letter by G. Hickes. London, 1710.

Two Sermons, preached in the Cathedral Church of Salisbury; the first on 5th Nov., the second on 7th Nov., in the year 1710. By the Right Rev. Father in God, Gilbert [Burnet], Lord Bishop of Salisbury. London, 1710.

The White Crow; or an Inquiry into some new doctrines broached by the Bishop of Salisbury in a pair of sermons. [London] 1710.

Sacerdotal Powers; or the necessity of confession, penance and absolution, together with the nullity of unauthorized lay baptism, asserted in an essay; occasioned by the publication of the B—— of S——'s two sermons preached at Salisbury, the 5th and 7th of November, 1710. By the author of *Lay-Baptism Invalid*. London, 1711.

Remarks on Two late Sermons preached in the Cathedral Church of Salisbury: in a Letter to a friend, to which is added a Postscript, wherein the charge of uncharitableness against the Church for condemning lay baptism as invalid is more particularly considered and confuted. London, 1711.

A Letter to the Author of Lay-Baptism Invalid; wherein the popish doctrine of lay baptism taught in a sermon said to have been preached by the B—— of S——, the 7th of Nov. 1710, is censured and condemned by the Greek Church, the Church of England, the Reformed abroad, and even by our English Presbyterian sectaries. By Thomas Brett. London, 1711. [Published Sept. 8.]

The Rights of the Clergy of the Christian Church; or a Discourse shewing that God has given and appropriated to the clergy authority to ordain, baptize, preach, preside in Church prayers, and consecrate the Lord's Supper, &c. By Thomas Bennet, M.A., Rector of St. James's, Colchester. London, 1711.

Lay-Baptism Invalid, &c. Third edition, more correct and enlarged than the former. In which some notice is taken of a Declaration lately proposed to be established, &c. With an Appendix: wherein the boasted unanswerable objection of the B. of S., and other new objections, are answered. By a Lay-Hand. London, 1712.

The Judgment of the Church of England in the case of lay baptism and of dissenters' baptism: by which it appears that she hath not by any public act of hers made or declared lay baptism to be invalid. [By William Fleetwood, Bishop of St. Asaph.] London, 1712.

Second edition: with an additional Letter from Dr. John Cosin, afterwards Bishop of Durham, to Mr. Cordel. London, 1712.

The Second Part of the Judgment, &c. London, 1712.

Dissenters' and other unauthorized Baptisms null and void, by the articles, canons, and rubrics of the Church of England. In answer to a pamphlet called *The Judgment of the Church of England in the case of*

lay baptism and of dissenters' baptism. By the Author of Lay-Baptism Invalid. London, 1712.

The Bishop of Oxford's Charge at his Visitation. [Talbot.] London, 1712.

The Bishop of Oxford's Charge considered in reference to . . . the invalidity of baptism administered by persons not episcopally ordained. In an humble address to his lordship. By the Author of Lay-Baptism Invalid. London, 1712.

The extent of Christ's commission to baptize. A sermon shewing the capacity of infants to receive, and the utter incapacity of dissenting teachers to administer, Christian baptism. With a Preface to the Dissenters. By Thos. Brett, Rector of Betteshanger. London, 1712.

The Previous Question to the several questions about valid and invalid baptism, lay baptism, &c., considered. London, 1712.

The Judgment of the Reformed in France, extracted out of the acts of their public synods, as also that of Mr. Calvin and other Genevans concerning the invalidity of lay baptism: in a Letter to the Author of Lay Baptism Invalid. By a Priest of the Church of England, and Rector of a Church in the city of London [Luke Milbourn]. London, 1712.

A Scholastical History of the Practice of the Church in reference to the administration of baptism by laymen: Wherein an account is given of the practice of the primitive Church, the practice of the modern Greek Church, and the practice of the Churches of the Reformation. With an Appendix, containing some remarks on the historical part of Mr. Lawrence's writings touching the invalidity of lay baptism; his preliminary Discourse of the various opinions of the fathers concerning rebaptization and invalid baptisms; and his Discourse of Sacerdotal Powers. London, 1712.

An Inquiry into the Judgment and Practice of the Primitive Church in relation to persons being baptized by laymen: wherein Mr. Bingham's Scholastical History is considered: with an Appendix in answer to the Lord Bishop of Oxford's Charge. By Thos. Brett. London, 1712.

The Second Part of Lay-Baptism Invalid: shewing that the ancient catholic Church never had any ecclesiastical law, tradition, or custom, for the validity of baptisms performed by persons who never were commissioned by bishops to baptize; all proved from the Reverend Mr. Bingham's Scholastical History of Lay Baptism, and from other evidences not produced by that historian. By the Author of Lay-Baptism Invalid. London, 1713.

Dissenters' and other unauthorized Baptisms, &c. Second edition. London, 1713. [A third edition was printed in 1810.]

Sacerdotal Powers, &c. The second edition, more correct than the former. London, 1713.

An Answer to the exceptions made against the Lord Bishop of Oxford's Charge by Mr. L. and Dr. B., in which the reasonableness of the Bishop's advice to his clergy is vindicated. By a Country Clergyman. [Said to be Dr. John Turner, Vicar of Greenwich; see Kenet. p. 274.] London, 1713.

The State and Importance of the Present Controversy about the validity of lay baptism fairly represented: in a Letter to the Author of Lay-Baptism Invalid; in which is shewn the unreasonableness of the clamours, and the weakness of the arguments which are brought by those who would make all lay baptism absolutely null and void; occasioned by the severe reflections made in several of their writings; and particularly in a Letter from a Priest of the Church of England, and Rector of a Church in the city of London; and in The Bishop of Oxford's Charge considered. By a Country Clergyman. [Same as previous one.] London, 1713.

A Compendious Speculation upon valid and invalid baptism. By Samuel Hill, M.A., Archdeacon and Canon Residentiary of Wells. London, 1713.

The Validity of Baptism administered by Dissenting Ministers, and the unreasonableness of refusing burial to children so baptized; first offered to the consideration of a dissenting congregation at two public baptisms, on the occasion of that new notion, denying all such to be Christians who have been baptized by persons not episcopally ordained, and the late agreement of some neighbouring clergymen not to bury any such. Now published (with some alterations) for the conviction of unprejudiced churchmen and the satisfaction of protestant dissenters. By a presbyter of the Church of Christ [Ferdinando Shaw, a dissenting minister in Derby]. Nottingham, 1713.

An Answer to a late Pamphlet, entitled *The Validity of Baptism administered by dissenters*, in which what that author hath offered is fully considered and refuted, and some propositions are laid down, from which the invalidity of lay baptisms and Presbyterian ordinations may be fairly inferred. By a Lay Man. Nottingham, 1713. [Published March 21, 1713-14.]

The Invalidity of Lay Baptisms by Dissenting Teachers, proved from Scripture and Antiquity, and from the judgment of the Church of England, &c. In answer to a late pamphlet compiled chiefly of collections from the Bishop of Sarum's writings and the Bishop of Oxford's Charge, by Mr. Shaw, a dissenting teacher in Derby, entitled, *The Validity of Baptism administered by Dissenting Ministers*. To which is added, *A vindication of the clergy's refusal to read the burial office over unbaptized persons*, shewing the reasonableness of such refusal. With an Appendix. By Henry Cantrell, M.A., Vicar of St. Alkmund's, Derby. With a Letter from the Rev. Mr. Harris. Nottingham, 1714.

A Caveat against the new sect of anabaptists lately sprung up at Exon, shewing the novelty and schism and absurdity and dangerous tendency of their principles and practices, who were concerned in the rebaptizing of Mr. Benjamin Read. In a Letter to a friend. [By Mr. Withers.] 2nd edition. London, 1714.

A Reply to . . . a Caveat, &c. In a Letter to a friend, by Benjamin Read. 1714.

A Defence of the Caveat against the new sect of anabaptists, in answer to Mr. Read's Reply. By Hubert Stogden. Exeter, 1714.

Donatus Redivivus; or a reprimand to a modern Church schismatic for the revival of the Donatistical heresy of rebaptization, in defiance to the judgment and practice of the catholic Church, and of the Church of England in particular: in a letter to himself. [By Mr. O——n.] London, 1714. [July 10.]

An Answer to a Scurrilous Pamphlet called *Donatus Redivivus*, lately written by a dissenting teacher; occasioned by the conversion and baptism of two young gentlewomen. By way of a letter from one of the said gentlewomen to the Rev. Mr. L——ter, M.A., Library keeper at Manchester. London, 1715 [1714].

The Amazon Disarmed, or the sophisms of a schismatical pamphlet pretendedly writ by a gentlewoman, entitled, *An Answer to Donatus Redivivus*, exposed and confuted, being a further vindication of the Church of England from the scandalous imputation of Donatism or rebaptization. In a letter to two Manchester Levites; occasioned by their public defence of their crime in perverting and rebaptizing two young gentlewomen. London, 1714.

A Scholastical History of the practice of the Church in reference to the administration of baptism by laymen. Part II., with some considerations on Dr. Brett's and Mr. Lawrence's answers to the first part. London, 1714.

A Supplement to the first and second Parts of Lay-Baptism Invalid, shewing that the heretical and schismatical baptisms which some ancient Churches esteemed to have been valid, were not lay baptisms, in the opinion of those Churches: in answer to the second part of Mr. Bingham's pretended Scholastical History of lay baptism; and proved out of that same book, and the other writings of Mr. Bingham. By the author of *Lay-Baptism Invalid*. London, 1714.

A Further Inquiry into the judgment and practice of the primitive Church of England, in relation to persons baptized by laymen: wherein the second part of Mr. Bingham's Scholastical History is considered. By Th. Brett. London, 1714.

A Dissertation upon the Eighth Canon of the Council of Nice; proving that Novatian, the heretic, was never allowed to be a true bishop in any part of the catholic Church; with some remarks on Mr. Lawrence's way of handling the controversy about lay baptism. London, 1715.

[Bingham's three essays on the subject of lay baptism are reprinted in vol. viii. of the 1844 edition of his Works.]

Letters on Lay Baptism between Dr. Waterland and Rev. E. Kelsall, 1713-1714 or 1715. [First printed in Van Mildert's edition of Waterland's Works, 1823.]

A Dissertation upon the case of Heretical and Schismatical Baptisms. By Nathaniel Marshall, LL.B. [Appended to the Acts of the Council of Carthage in Marshall's edition of the Works of Cyprian, 1717, pp. 256-278.]

A Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer, &c. By Charles Wheatly, M.A. London, 1720. [Chap. vii. App. 1, § 2. Of the proper minister of private baptism.]

Lay-Baptism Invalid, &c. The fourth edition, more correct than the former; in which some notice is taken of an ecclesiastical declaration proposed to be established, about ten years since, in favour of such usurpations. By R. Laurence, M.A. London, 1723. [Reprinted, together with *Dissenters' Baptisms, &c.*, with additions and illustrations, by William Scott, M.A. London, 1841.]

A Letter to the most Rev. the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury [Dr. John Potter] concerning the validity of lay baptism, and of the baptisms of those who never had episcopal baptism nor ordination. [Signed Philalethes.] London, 1738.

A Letter to the Rev. Mr. Castleman, Vicar of South Petherton, Somerset, on his turning anabaptist. London, 1751.

The Validity of Lay Baptism Examined: and the arguments for and against it fairly stated. In a Letter to a Friend; occasioned by some passages in a book, lately published, entitled, *The Rubrick in the Book of Common Prayer, and the Canons of the Church of England considered.* [By Thomas Sharp, D.D., Archdeacon of Northumberland. London, 1753.] By James Moody, Rector of Duntun, in Bucks. London, 1755.

The Invalidity of Schismatical and Heretical Baptism, proved from reason, scripture, councils and fathers. By Orthodoxus. London, 1768.

B.—Publications, chiefly on the Burial Cases.

The Judgment delivered Dec. 11, 1809, by the Rt. Hon. Sir John Nicholl, Knt., LL.D., Official Principal of the Arches Court of Canterbury, upon the admission of articles exhibited in a cause of office promoted by Kemp against Wickes, clerk, for refusing to bury an infant child of two of his parishioners who had been baptized by a dissenting minister. Taken in shorthand by Mr. Gurney. London, 1810. [Reprinted in Reports of Cases argued and determined in the Ecclesiastical Courts. By Joseph Phillimore, LL.D. London, 1827, vol. iii. pp. 264–306.]

Remarks upon a Report of the judgment delivered by the Rt. Hon. Sir John Nicholl, Knt., LL.D., Official Principal of the Arches Court of Canterbury, &c. London, 1810. [Against the judgment.]

A Letter to Sir John Nicholl, Official Principal of the Arches Court of Canterbury, on his late decision in the ecclesiastical court against a clergyman for refusing to bury the child of a dissenter, with a Preface most humbly addressed to the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England. By a Clergyman. London, 1810. [Against the judgment.]

A Respectful Examination of the judgment delivered Dec. 11, 1809, by the Rt. Hon. Sir John Nicholl, Knt., LL.D., Official Principal of the Arches Court of Canterbury, against the Rev. John Wight Wickes, for refusing to bury an infant child which had been baptized by a dissenting minister. In a Letter to Sir John Nicholl, by the Rev. Charles Daubeny,

LL.D., Archdeacon of Sarum. Bath and London, 1811. [Against the judgment.]

The Anti-Jacobin Review, Feb. 1811, vol. xxxviii. pp. 191-208. [A Review of Daubeny's pamphlet. Against the judgment.]

Reflections on the judgment delivered by Sir John Nicholl against the Rev. J. W. Wickes. [By Thomas Burgess, Bishop of St. David's.] [Carmarthen ?] 1811. [Against the judgment.]

Remarks upon a late decision in the Court of Arches. By the Rev. George Hutton, D.D., Vicar of Sutterton. Boston and Spilsby, 1811. [Against the judgment.]

Quarterly Review, March 1812, vol. vii. pp. 200-223. [A Review of Daubeny's and Hutton's pamphlets. For the judgment.]

Dissenters' Baptisms and Church Burials: Strictures upon the decision of the late Sir John Nicholl; with an attempt at an investigation of the judgment of the Church of England upon the subject. By the Rev. Walter Blunt, M.A. Exeter, 1840.

The Christian Observer, April, 1840, pp. 220-225; June, 1840, pp. 352-354; July, 1840, pp. 406-411. [Counsel's Opinions, &c.]

Lay-Baptism Invalid, &c. By R. Laurence. With additions and illustrations, arranged and edited by William Scott, M.A., Perpetual Curate of Christ Church, Hoxton. London, 1841. [Scott's Preface, pp. vii.-li.]

A Full Report of the case of *Mastin v. Escott*, clerk, for refusing to bury an infant baptized by a Wesleyan minister, containing all the arguments on both sides, and the judgment delivered by the Rt. Hon. Sir Herbert Jenner, in the Arches Court of Canterbury, May 8, 1841; with an appendix of documents. By W. C. Curteis, LL.D., Advocate in Doctors' Commons. London, 1841.

The indeterminateness of Unauthorized Baptism, occasioned by Sir Herbert Jenner's decision in the case of *Mastin v. Escott*. By the Rev. C. Warren, Rector of Over, Cambs. Cambridge, 1841. [Against the judgment.]

The Judgment of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in the case of *Escott* against *Mastin*, on appeal from the Arches Court of Canterbury. From the shorthand notes of Mr. Gurney. London, 1842. [Reprinted in Stephens' Practical Treatise &c. vol. i.]

A Charge to the clergy of the Diocese of Exeter, 1842. By Henry [Phillpotts], Bishop of Exeter. London, 1842. [Pp. 38-60. Against the judgment.]

Holy Baptism. A Dissertation. By the Rev. William Maskell, M.A., London, 2nd ed., 1848. [Chaps. viii., ix.; pp. 176-252. On the whole question of the minister of baptism.]

A Practical Treatise of the Laws relating to the Clergy. By Archibald John Stephens. London, 1848. [Vol. i. pp. 100-126. The judgments on lay baptism.]

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHURCH OF THE PRESENT DAY.

The Greek Church : on Western baptism ; on lay baptism—The Russian Church—The Roman Church—The English Church : lay-baptism ; the Colonies ; Dissenters' baptism—The American Church : instances of rebaptism—The Scottish Church : canon of 1838 and 1863 ; opinions of bishops ; diocese of Argyll and the Isles—Position of the controversy.

IN order to complete the history, there remains only to gather up the opinions of recent years, in the several independent or divided communions of the catholic Church. It is an inevitable result of a long lack of that common interchange of thought which would belong to a united Christendom, that these should vary somewhat more than is healthy, and consequently that there should exist differences of discipline sufficient to produce elements of friction.

The tendency of the Greek Church has been towards the stricter rule of primitive times. From the point of view under which she regards the communions of the West it is natural that she should not do justice to their baptism. To her the triple immersion is an inherent part of the proper form of ordinary baptism ; and it is impossible not to respect her insistence upon a ceremony which, both historically and symbolically, is so far preferable to the affusion which, in practice, has become the rule, instead of the exception, in most parts

of the West. This divergence of use, together with an exaggerated readiness to charge Rome with heresy, has led the Orthodox Church of the East, in modern times, to reject Western baptism as probably invalid.

It has been seen that the East, by an exercise of 'economy,' had been willing sometimes to receive converts from the West with unction alone, both before and after the Reformation period.¹ Sergius Macraius, a Greek chronicler of the last century, says that this was because no general accusation had then been made against the Latin Church of 'having set aside the baptism of the Lord and the apostles.' It was said, indeed, that affusion or aspersion was sometimes practised, instead of immersion, but it was believed that the error was uncommon. 'But when, in the eighteenth century of the Church, the perniciously introduced custom of sprinkling spread and multiplied in the West, and the divinely transmitted form of baptism was increasingly disregarded or transformed into affusion or sprinkling, it was declared that those so sprinkled, not having received the divinely prescribed baptism, were unbaptized; and it was advised that proselytes should be baptized.'² The occasion for this tightening of discipline appears to have been the application of some Latins in Asia Minor to join the Eastern Church, in the time of the Patriarch of Constantinople, Cyril V. He decided synodically, in 1750, that they must be rebaptized. In 1756, in conjunction with Matthew, Patriarch of Alexandria, and Parthenius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, Cyril published this decree for rebaptizing Western converts, as the rule of the

¹ See *ante*, pp. 80, 132, 201.

² Sathas, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη*, Venice, 1872, vol. iii. p. 408.

Orthodox Church.³ From that time to this, the Greek Church has ordinarily adhered to this stringent regulation.

Easterns look upon the question very much from a disciplinary point of view. A Greek deacon told Mr. Athelstan Riley that they regarded Western baptism as no baptism, because it wanted immersion. At the same time it was admitted that it might be sufficient for regeneration; but it was not 'the sacrament of baptism.' 'When a Roman priest comes over to us,' said the Archbishop of Xanthe to Mr. Riley, 'we rebaptize him, because we do not allow baptism by aspersion, nor, except in cases of sickness, by affusion; and we reordain him, because an unbaptized person cannot be validly ordained. According to our doctrine the Pope of Rome himself is neither more nor less than an unbaptized layman, and if he joined our communion would have to be baptized. Still,' added the archbishop, 'supposing the *whole* Latin Church and its patriarch were to submit to us in a body, then the Church, by an exercise of the economy of the Church, would recognise Western baptisms and ordinations, and they would become valid by the mere act of recognition.'⁴

Throughout the whole of this modern treatment of Western baptism, it is evident that the question of the minister is subordinate to that of the ministration. Western baptism is invalid, not because it is given by one who, in Eastern eyes, is a layman or a heretic, but because it is given in a form which is held to be unorthodox. Yet the East has not resigned her primitive position with regard to the invalidity of

³ Constantine Oiconomos, *Tà ματα*, tom. i. p. 511.

Σωζόμενα Ἐκκλησιαστικὰ Συγγράμ-

⁴ Riley, *Athos*, 1887, pp. 109, 110.

baptism by heretics. Her theologians still refer to the Apostolical Canons, and to the judgments of Cyprian and Basil, as authoritative on this point. And modern Greek writers, at least in their private capacity, are often not unwilling to give the title of heretic to the members of the Roman communion, if not to the whole of the West.

As in the case of receiving the baptism of other communions, so in regard to baptism by her own lay people, the modern Greek Church has been inclined to limit the permission as far as possible.

Lay baptism is, however, acknowledged. 'The Orthodox Confession of the faith of the catholic and apostolic Church of the East,' says: 'Baptism, according to due order, ought not to be administered by any other than the lawful priest; but on the occasion of any necessity, a lay person, whether man or woman, may baptize, employing the right matter (simple and natural water), and uttering the words, In the Name, &c., and using trine immersion.'⁵ A manual for the clergy, entitled 'The duty of Parish Priests,' issued by authority, directs that they are to instruct their parishioners how to administer the sacrament validly, when urgent occasion arises.⁶ So, too, the canons of Nicephorus are still quoted in standard works, as giving command to the clergy to permit lay baptism, by any Christian person, and even by the father of the child, if death is imminent.⁷

This acceptance of lay baptism is now generally limited to its strictest letter. The monk Nicodemus

⁵ Schaff, *Creeds of the Greek and Latin Churches*, p. 377.

Church, vol. i. p. 948.

⁷ Πηδάλιον, p. 713, note.

⁶ Neale, *History of the Eastern*

says: 'It is the opinion of some, that children baptized by laymen in necessity, are rightly numbered among the orthodox if they die, as being in the hope of receiving divine mercy. But those who have been baptized by a layman without necessity, or by one wickedly pretending to be a priest, if they die, should not so be reckoned, for they are unbaptized.'⁸ Therefore, a person so wrongly baptized, must be baptized again in an orthodox manner; and even if the danger seemed imminent, the child must be rebaptized if it recovers. 'What is done in time of danger, and in necessity, is not a law for the Church.'⁹ This exactly expresses the view of orthodox theologians of the present day. Dr. Plaisas, an archimandrite, writes: 'The Greek Church generally does not consider lay baptism as valid. If one, however, be baptized by a layman in case of fear of immediate death, the Church considers such a baptism valid, when death follows immediately on the baptism; but if the thus baptized live, he must be baptized by a priest again. And if one, at last, be baptized by a pretending priest, in case of fear of immediate death or not, the Church would never consider this baptism valid, even if death should follow on the baptism; according to the 47th Apostolic canon, the first canon of St. Basil the Great, and the undernote of the 24th canon of *Νηστευτοῦ*.'¹

The Greek Church has no hypothetical form, and therefore an uncertain baptism can be secured in no other way than by unconditional baptism. The result

⁸ *Πηδάλιον*, p. 58.

⁹ *Ibid.* comp. p. 713.

¹ See *Πηδάλιον*, p. 712. I am indebted for this communication, and for information as to authorities on

the subject, to the courtesy of Dr. Dionysius Plaisas, the Archimandrite, of the Greek Church at Bayswater.

of her strict rule is that every living member of her communion upon earth has been baptized at some time or other by one of her own orthodox priests.

The Church of Russia, although in communion with the orthodox Greek Church, is under a separate and not identical discipline. The Russian rule about baptism is less stringent than the Greek. Thus the rebaptism of Western converts is not insisted upon in Russia. When, some years ago, the Rev. W. Palmer was attracted to the Eastern Church, and would have joined her communion, he was prevented, because he could only be received by renouncing his English baptism in submitting to be baptized according to Greek usage. In Russia there would not have been the same obstacle, and when he failed to induce the Greeks to accept him as baptized, he published an essay at Athens, in 1852, which he entitled, 'Dissertations concerning the Eastern or Orthodox Church; by a certain Englishman, who is excluded from its communion by the differences now existing in it, the Russians telling him that he is baptized, and forbidding his rebaptism, but the Greeks insisting that he is absolutely unbaptized and prescribing to him a new baptism.'² The difference, however, even from a Greek point of view, is one mainly of discipline; for if a convert is received by the Russians, without rebaptism, he is acknowledged by the Greeks after his reception.³

The rule as to lay baptism, in Russia, is also laxer than among the Greeks, in that its validity is more readily allowed. 'Lay baptism,' says M. Smirnoff, a Russian priest of the present day, 'is allowed only in the cases of imminent danger. To prevent children

² Constantine Oiconomos, tom. i. p. 494.

³ *Ibid.* p. 513.

from dying unbaptized, every midwife is instructed immediately to baptize the child, as soon as she sees the danger. If a child survives, the orthodox priest has to read the omitted prayers, and to perform the sacrament of unction. This usage has been received by the Russian Church from the Church of Greece 900 years ago.⁴ But, since then, the Greeks, as has been seen, have so far modified the leave as to require rebaptism by a priest on recovery.

Of the Roman communion of the present day very little need be said. Her teaching is that of mediæval times, crystallised into its extremest form by the councils of Florence and of Trent. But, if she is bound in theory to accept irregular baptism to a greater extent than any other part of Christendom, at any rate as regards schismatical and heretical administration, the East herself is scarcely more persistent in rebaptizing converts than Rome is in practice. The Greek Church has the plea of insisting upon triple immersion; but the Roman form does not differ from that of other catholic bodies in the West; yet she generally rebaptizes proselytes from them, as well as those from the East. As there cannot in most cases be a shadow of doubt that the baptism was performed with water and the due words, her excuse for rebaptism must be sought elsewhere than in these ordinary essentials. It is to be found, perhaps, in the manner in which the doctrine of intention is understood among Roman catholics, and in

⁴ The Rev. Eugene Smirnoff, Priest of the Russian community in London, has kindly written me the above. See also Romanoff,

Sketches of the Rites and Customs of the Græco-Russian Church, 1869, pp. 79, 80.

the permission given to bishops by the Ritual to reject heretical baptism if there seems sufficient cause.⁵ This allows an undefined breadth of discretion, which the present Roman temper would scarcely be slow to exercise. As a matter of fact she does exercise it so considerably as practically to neutralise her theory of the validity of irregular baptism, into a rejection of whatever is not administered within her own jurisdiction.

The consequence is that the Roman communion contains scarce any who have not had the sacrament of baptism administered to them by a Roman priest, the cases of baptism by laymen in emergency not, probably, being numerous.

In England, the controversial aspect of the question is at present quite different from that in the East and in Rome. For among us there is no desire to challenge the validity of the baptisms given in the other communions of the catholic Church. No bishop or priest of any school of thought in England would venture to speak of an Eastern or Roman churchman as unbaptized, or to propose the advisability of rebaptism.

Baptism by lay churchmen has become a very rare thing in England itself. The withdrawal of public instruction on the matter, either in the Prayer Book or in sermons, has had as much effect in checking the practice as the most zealous of the puritans could have desired. In spite of some revival of the old teaching, the mass of the English laity are still quite unprepared to take the ministry of baptism upon themselves even in the hour of danger to life. However low the opinions of a layman may be upon the sacerdotal

⁵ See *ante*, p. 205.

character of the priesthood, he is, as a rule, in the present day, extremely unwilling to usurp its sacramental functions. Now and then, perhaps, where the mediæval teaching has been restored, it may not have been sufficiently guarded by the caution that the laity are only to baptize at the last extremity, when every effort to obtain a priest has failed. Hence occasional instances of rash and unnecessary baptism may be found; but they are far from being common. It is much commoner that children are allowed to die without baptism of any kind, if a clergyman is not conveniently at hand.

In a country like England, with priests in every parish, the need for lay baptism is reduced to a minimum. It is otherwise in some of the colonies, and has been so to even a greater extent in past years, when the clergy were still fewer in number than they are now. The alternative has often lain between an indefinite postponement of baptism, or baptizing by a lay hand. Bishop Forbes, of Brechin, thought the latter was the right course to take. Canon Dakers, who was his private chaplain in 1852-3, says that on one occasion he 'was with the bishop and the late Rev. Charles Erskine, for many years incumbent of Stonehaven, when the subject of conversation was the position of a relation of Mr. Erskine, then living with his family in India in a station distant from any priest. The bishop said, "Write at once and urge them to baptize the children themselves." In that view Mr. Erskine, himself no mean scholar and theologian, seemed to concur.'⁶

The exigencies of colonial life have, in some cases,

⁶ *Scottish Guardian*, May 11, 1888.

led to a professed system of lay baptism as the only thing to be done without leaving people to live and die unbaptized. A retired East Indian chaplain wrote to the *Church Times*, in 1887, 'In India it used to be a common practice in up-country stations, where no chaplain or other episcopally ordained minister could be had, for the officer commanding the station to baptize infants, and their baptisms were registered, and certificates were given of the same. These were not schismatic or rival baptisms; the ministry of the Church would have been used had it been within reach; at any rate that was the intention in very many instances, and many of the children so baptized were in due time confirmed and became communicants.'

The following is a copy of an actual certificate of one of the baptisms thus given by a lay official in India. 'This is to certify that —, the daughter of —, Captain of the — regiment of native infantry, and —, his wife, born on the 27th day of September, 1831, was baptized by me, according to the Form of Public Baptism set forth in the rubrick of the Church of England, this 1st day of December, 1831.' This certificate is witnessed by the names of the sponsors, and signed, 'Edward Cadogan, Acting Resident in Travancore and Cochin, acting as minister where no ordained clergyman resides.'⁷

The propriety of such baptisms has been questioned, and their validity doubted; but it is impossible not to feel that those who adopted this plan were rightly doing the only thing they could do, under the exigencies of their peculiar circumstances. If such baptism had been absolutely forbidden by the Church

⁷ Information from the Rev. George B. Howard.

it would have been different ; but the most that can be said is that permission has been withdrawn. ‘It does seem cruel,’ says the same East Indian chaplain, referring to the declaration of 1575, which, however, has no binding authority, if it was ever published at all, ‘It does seem cruel that “the archbishops and bishops” in Queen Elizabeth’s reign and subsequently, when the spread of our “plantations” had already created a necessity, should have limited the right to baptize to a lawful minister, and yet have omitted to say what should be done when no lawful minister could be found, and that want of rule and uncertainty in this matter should have been allowed to continue even to our own day.’⁸

No active controversy upon dissenters’ baptism has arisen since the burial cases in the law courts. The revived life of the Church, with an increased faith in the doctrine of sacraments and the priesthood, has left this question almost untouched. The general disposition has been to regard the ordinary practice of baptism by dissenters as exactly equivalent to its extraordinary practice in necessity by laymen. The latter having been permitted by the mediæval and modern Roman discipline, the former is now accepted without demur, as if it were identically the same. With rare exceptions, bishops and clergy treat dissenters’ baptism practically as on a level with their own, and no form even of reconciliation with the Church is known to the common usage of the Church of England.

Bishop Forbes allowed that there was a certain doubt in the matter ; but he did not distinguish

⁸ *Church Times*, June 17, 1887, p. 493.

between the ministry of laymen, in necessity, with the permission of the Church, and that of dissenters, without necessity, and in defiance of her discipline. To him, as to most, it was simply the old consideration of lay baptism, and his own inclination was on the side of its validity. 'We now come,' he says in his book on the Creed, 'to a question which divides orthodox divines within the Anglican communion, who can be the administrator or minister of baptism. Some learned theologians maintain it to be a priestly act; others maintain that anyone may baptize. The question is eminently practical, for it involves the question of the validity of the baptism of dissenters and Presbyterians, their so-called orders being invalid, as lacking the apostolic succession. On the one hand it is urged, that the Church being a society or corporation, no one can initiate a member into it, but one of the proper office-bearers; that the right to baptize implies the right to teach; that Scripture gives no evidence of the permissibility; that St. Cyprian, Firmilian and Basil have by implication condemned it. On the other hand it is urged, that in a question so necessary to salvation, the widest permission is the most consonant with the mercy of God; that as in cases of necessity a layman may teach, so he may baptize; that the silence of Scripture throws us necessarily back upon the tradition of the Church, which is in favour of the laxer practice: Tertullian, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, advocating it; and even the council of Elvira, with two restrictions, permitting it. The validity of baptism by women is more doubtful. In cases of necessity, the Roman Church allows it, justifying her practice by the arguments above cited; but then it must be recollected that

Tertullian expressly forbids it. St. Epiphanius condemns the Marcionites and Pepuzians for practising it; and the 100th canon of the fourth council of Carthage, A.D. 436 [398], at which St. Augustine himself was present, forbid it. But perhaps the persons condemned may have practised it without reference to an emergency. In all cases where immediate death is apprehended before a lawful minister can be called, it is the safer side for any sufficiently informed person to administer it.⁹ It will be observed that there appears to be no recognition of the difference between dissenters' baptism, and that in necessity by churchmen.

In his later work on the Thirty-nine Articles, Bishop Forbes gives simply the Roman rule, without its caution as to intention. 'The ordinary minister of baptism,' he says, 'is he who has ordinary jurisdiction. A deacon may baptize, by commission from the bishop, in defect of priests. In case of necessity any one, having the use of reason, who baptizes with water in the Name of the Holy Trinity, is accepted—priest, deacon, layman, male, female, heretic, or excommunicate. Persons are not to be rebaptized who are baptized with the proper form and words by heretics, even by Calvinists who deny that baptism remits sin, unless there be a doubt of the sufficiency of the administration.'¹

More explicitly still, in relation to dissenters, Canon Liddon has said, 'If the non-episcopal bodies have no true orders, they have unquestionably a true baptism, supposing the matter and words of that sacrament to

⁹ Forbes, *Explanation of Nicene Creed*, 1st ed. 1852, 2nd ed. 1866, p. 299.

¹ Forbes, *Thirty-nine Articles*, vol. ii. p. 494.

be duly administered; since lay baptism is of undoubted validity.’²

The ordinary manuals of instruction usually speak with equal confidence of the identity of dissenters’ baptism with lay baptism permitted in urgency. Thus Blunt and Phillimore’s *Book of Church Law*, a handbook much relied on by the clergy, after maintaining the validity of lay baptism in necessity under the English Prayer Book, passes on at once to apply this conclusion to dissenters’ baptism. ‘Lay baptism being thus allowed to be valid in case of necessity, it is yet clear that its validity depends upon the manner of its administration, not upon the reality of the necessity; and hence even if there is no such necessity, it must still be accounted valid, provided the proper matter and form are used. Hence baptism by dissenting ministers, who have not received priests’ or deacons’ orders at the hands of a bishop, are valid lay baptisms if administered with water and the valid form of words. . . . It is hardly necessary to add that lay baptism should be resorted to only in great extremity; and that when the sacrament is administered by one who is not ordained, without such necessity, the person baptizing is guilty of no small sin, even though his act may bring a blessing to the person baptized. His act cannot be undone, but it ought not to have been done.’³

The *Church Times* also, in its answers to correspondents, repeatedly asserts the validity of baptism by dissenters, or any person whatsoever, under all circumstances, as a matter about which no doubt or question can be entertained.

² Liddon, *A Father in Christ*, 3rd ed. p. xxxix.

³ Blunt and Phillimore, *Book of Church Law*, 1873, p. 45.

Here and there a voice has been raised upon the other side. A few essays have been written of late years urging that the mind of the Church has not been expressed so absolutely and unanimously as is usually supposed, and especially that dissenters' baptism has not received her formal sanction at all.⁴ Some degree of increasing attention may have been called to the subject; but this stricter opinion is certainly very unpopular in England at present, and is regarded by most in the light of an eccentricity which possibly may be scarcely sound and orthodox.

In America the question of dissenters' baptism has pressed to a greater extent even than in England, and there it has received more consideration.

The official directions given in the American Prayer Book are exactly the same as those in the English. The rubrics of the office for Private Baptism are taken from those in our Book, with a few of the merest verbal alterations, which do not in any way affect the teaching. The American Church, therefore, is only pledged, by the terms of the office itself, to acknowledge baptism by a 'lawful minister.' Some have argued from this that she rejects lay baptism as invalid, just as they do the same in the case of the English communion. The soundness of this argument must stand or fall with its soundness as applied to the Prayer Book of the Church of England, unless it is urged that the American Church, having no old tradition of lay baptism like that in mediæval England, was less bound to have distinctly repudiated it, in order to make it invalid.

⁴ E.g., especially the Rev. Edward C. Baldwin's earnest challenge of the common view in *A Matter of Life and Death; A Letter to all who profess and call themselves Christians* (Longhurst), 1879.

Other definite direction, she has none; nor has she taken any steps to frame any as a guide to her clergy. The American bishops in an 'Overture for unity,' in 1886, speak as follows: 'We believe that all who have been duly baptized with water, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, are members of the holy catholic Church.'⁵ But Mr. Forrester, an American clergyman, writes, 'It is an open secret here that the word "duly," upon which the value of the statement depends, was inserted because some of the bishops insisted on guarding the Church against any sanction of unauthorised baptisms.'⁶

So strongly have some of the American bishops felt the uncertainty of dissenting baptism, that a few of them, who were baptized originally in dissent, have sought conditional baptism for themselves within the Church. Thus, so long back as 1844, Dr. Southgate, late missionary bishop at Constantinople, was baptized in St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia, on the eve of his consecration, and the baptism is entered in the registers of that Church. The present Bishop of Minnesota, Dr. Whipple, likewise received hypothetical baptism, and it is said that the same is the case with others of the American episcopate.

Dr. Batterson, of Philadelphia, writes, 'The late Bishop of Mississippi,' Dr. Green, 'would under no circumstances ordain, even to the diaconate, any one who had not received the Church's baptism, and he always urged "that candidates for confirmation be instructed that lay baptism was of doubtful validity." In my own case,' adds Dr. Batterson, 'I received the

⁵ *Journal of General Convention of 1886*, p. 80.

⁶ Rev. H. Forrester to Rev. W. Elwin, May 14, 1889.

Church's baptism, by the Rev., now Bishop, Coxe. I always urge it upon any candidates from dissenting bodies seeking confirmation. Baptism by a layman would not be tolerated here, except *in extremis*, and even then many of us would insist upon the hypothetical form by a priest. Speaking for myself I do not hesitate to say that I regard dissenters' baptism as totally invalid. I make a distinction between the baptism by a layman and a dissenter or sectary. How can a man admit another to a society to which he does not belong himself? ⁷

This is the opinion of a minority of the American clergy, mostly of the school of high churchmen. Perhaps, too, very many who, on the whole, favour conditional baptism, would not endorse Dr. Batterson's words, as precisely expressing their own views. For instance, the Bishop of Minnesota states his own position thus: 'I have no scruples against the use of the hypothetical form of baptism in the case of those not baptized in the Church. I was so baptized myself. For the settlement of all possible doubts I have advised it. I believe that the weight of the testimony and example of the Western Church, as well as in earlier ages, is in favour of the validity of all Christian baptism in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy

⁷ Rev. H. G. Batterson, D.D., to Rev. W. Elwin, March 13, 1889. There seem to be special reasons for hesitating to accept dissenters in America without baptism, apart from doubts about the minister. 'The Rector of one of the most successful parishes in New York,' writes Dr. Batterson, April 6, 1889, 'tells me it is his invariable habit, or

rule, to give hypothetical baptism in all cases which come to him from dissent, as it is well known how lax they are. . . . The Presbyterians here will not baptize a child unless the parents are what they term "full members." . . . Then the Unitarians, a strong body in New England, never baptize in the Name of the Trinity.'

Ghost. I do not believe the Church authorises her clergy to refuse confirmation to those who have been so baptized, they being duly instructed and leading a Christian life.’⁸ And, preaching before the bishops at Lambeth in 1888, Dr. Whipple so entirely accepted the reasonableness of allowing baptism by the sects to hold good, that, in saying of the Anglo-Saxon Church that she ‘holds all the truths which underlie the possibility of reunion,’ he mentioned as the first of these truths, without any hint at qualification, ‘the validity of all Christian baptism in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.’⁹

‘So far as the position of individuals is concerned,’ writes Mr. Forrester, ‘I think the vast majority of the clergy, including the bishops, recognise all persons baptized with water and the proper form of words, by anyone whomsoever, as “duly” baptized, so far as to make them members of the catholic Church. A comparatively small number maintain the utter invalidity of baptism administered without the authority of the Church. . . . The few probably hold that the authority of the Church is essential; while some would deny that this authority could be given apart from ordination.’¹

Among American churchmen, therefore, there is very far from being a unanimous agreement, either as to the course which it is right to pursue with regard to dissenting baptism, in the abstract, or as to the principles of Church discipline which form the basis of

⁸ Right Rev. Dr. Whipple, Bishop of Minnesota, to Rev. W. Elwin, April 16, 1889.

⁹ *The Guardian*, July 4, 1888, p. 992.

¹ Rev. H. Forrester to Rev. W.

Elwin, May 14, 1889. Mr. Forrester has in preparation for the press a work upon baptism, of which nearly half, he tells me, will be devoted to the question of the legitimate minister.

action. The policy of leaving the question in an indefinite position has led there, as in England, to some doubt and confusion and scruple.

As in the last century, so in this, the subject has had a special history in Scotland. The baptism of converts from Presbyterianism not only continued to be common, but it received very distinct, if indirect sanction, of a high kind.

In 1838 a canon was passed at a general synod in Edinburgh, which says: ‘When a person who applies to be admitted into the communion of this Church shall express a doubt of the validity of the baptism which he has received, the clergyman to whom the application is made shall baptize the person in the form of words prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer in cases of doubt—“If thou art not already baptized, N. I baptize thee In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.”’²

Presbyterian baptism is not, certainly, here declared to be invalid. A fresh Church baptism was not made compulsory, unless the candidate himself felt scruples. Nor is the nature of the doubt defined. It might refer to the matter or the form, and there are very special grounds for insecurity as to the contact of the water in many Presbyterian baptisms.³ But as there is no

² *Code of Canons of the Episcopal Church of Scotland*, can. xxxiv. 4, ed. 1877, p. 32.

³ There appears to be extreme doubt about this. ‘From testimonies too numerous to be specified,’ says the Bishop of Argyll, ‘I have learnt, and I daresay you have learnt also, that among the various religious

denominations which exist round about us, baptism, as performed by them, has been, and still is, administered with great carelessness, especially as to the application of the water to the person of the candidate. This carelessness (not perhaps to be wondered at, among those who do not hold and teach the

specification of these two obvious requirements, and as it is known that scruples as to the minister largely prevailed, one may be sure that the latter as well as the former were in the minds of the members of the synod. They were at least ready to allow that a Presbyterian preacher was not a valid administrator of the sacrament beyond dispute.

In 1863 the canon was modified. By the substitution of 'may' for 'shall,' it took the form, 'The clergyman . . . may baptize the person,' &c. In the original shape he was obliged to do it if the applicant wished; in this he was left discretionary power. The present Bishop of Edinburgh, Dr. Dowden, says the change 'must possess some significance. Possibly it may have been made to meet the objections of clergymen who might scruple to use even the hypothetical form in a case where they themselves had satisfactory evidence that both the matter and form of the sacrament had been duly observed. Such hypothetical baptism might be regarded as casting a doubt where, in their view, no ground for doubt existed.'⁴ The priest, therefore, is no longer compelled by canon to satisfy the mind of

reality of baptismal grace) has, I understand, been chiefly conspicuous in the case of baptisms performed by aspersion from elevated pulpits.—*Charge*, 1888, p. 28. The Rev. J. Brodie-Innes mentions a particular case where some who desired to be received into the Church 'had doubts and questions about the baptism they were said to have received. Beside the general questions of lay baptism, baptism by those not in communion with the Church, &c., there was the question whether the proper form

had certainly been used. The customary sprinkling over the side of the pulpit had been the general use, suggesting doubt whether water had ever touched the child; and on certain occasions the kirk officer had omitted to provide water; still the form had been gone through without it. As may be supposed, the minister attached but little importance to the ceremony of baptism, which he deemed an outward form only.'—Letter in *Scottish Guardian*, Oct. 19, 1888, p. 520.

⁴ *Charge*, 1888, p. 24.

the candidate by a Church baptism; but he is not in any way prohibited from so doing if he pleases.

The practical working of a vaguely worded decree of this kind must vary much with the opinions of the clergy themselves. Bishop Terrot, who held the see of Edinburgh from 1841 to 1872, said he would never suggest doubts as to the validity of Presbyterian baptism to one who did not spontaneously express them, and he would feel it his duty to censure any of his clergy if they encouraged doubts or insisted on re-baptism. At the same time, he was willing to use the hypothetical form in any case where a person wished it himself.⁵ Bishop Dowden would go further, for he would apparently desire the clergy to endeavour to persuade the candidate that there is no occasion for doubt or for baptizing conditionally, 'though,' he adds, 'I shall not say that he may not be justified in doing so, if he fails, after imparting proper instruction on the subject, to satisfy the scruples—even the entirely baseless scruples—of the applicant.'⁶ Such a position seems hardly satisfactory. No degree of 'baseless scruples' can justify even hypothetical baptism. There must be a legitimate uncertainty as to whether a person has ever really been baptized or not, or its use would be a serious profanation. It does seem, therefore, that in permitting it to be employed in cases which, as a matter of fact, do include doubts about the right of the minister, as well as the method of his administration, the Scottish Church is committed to the view that the power of a Presbyterian to give the sacrament of baptism is, to say the least, not absolutely certain.

⁵ 'A. H.' in *Scottish Guardian*, May 18, 1888.

⁶ Bishop of Edinburgh, *Charge*, 1888, p. 24.

The Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, Dr. Chinnery-Haldane, so far from being disposed to remove scruples from the minds of Presbyterians, would urge that they are well founded. 'I would not,' he says, 'presume to pronounce lay baptism certainly invalid. Still I think the uncertainty of lay baptism ought to be very plainly stated; and the duty of all who have received a baptism, open at any rate to suspicion, to be conditionally baptized, ought to be urged. This is the practical point. And with regard to this matter, I feel that there is a duty to others as well as to ourselves. We have not only to be satisfied in our own minds, but we ought not to run the risk of giving rise to doubts and anxieties in the minds of other people.'⁷ 'Again and again cases have arisen, to my knowledge, of persons who, long after confirmation and admission to holy communion, have expressed doubts as to their baptism in infancy. Surely such doubts are most detrimental to the spiritual life, even should they be groundless. In these cases, of course, there should be no hesitation in complying with the request, when made, for conditional baptism. Yet how much better if the possibility of all disquieting scruples had been provided against at the outset. . . . My own experience is, that when the matter is properly explained, and, above all, when judiciously carried out, not only no objections are raised, but, on the contrary, the conditional baptism is thankfully accepted. Objections are certainly not likely to occur in the minds of those who are really in earnest in their desire to conform to apostolic order, and to submit themselves humbly to the discipline of the Church. As to those who are not so minded,

⁷ Bishop of Argyll to Rev. W. Elwin, Oct. 2, 1888.

would it not be better that they should refrain from joining themselves to us?'⁸

The bishop has put this into practical shape by requiring that all converts from Presbyterianism shall receive baptism in the Church before they are presented to him for confirmation. For the first few years of his episcopate he refrained from insisting upon this, though with some hesitation. In 1886 he urged it, in the Charge just quoted, as 'the more excellent way,' dwelling much on the doubts as to administration, as well as briefly alluding to the question of the minister. In the early autumn of 1887, however, he made the rule absolute.⁹ In 1888 he entered at length into the subject in his Charge to the clergy of his diocese, dwelling there especially upon the doubts as to the minister, as he had in his Charge of 1886 dwelt on those as to the matter and form among the Presbyterians. It is satisfactory to note that his strict regulation has at least not had the effect of diminishing the number of candidates for confirmation, for he has been able to report a considerable increase in these each year since he made it.¹

The action of Bishop Chinnery-Haldane in enforcing conditional baptism has naturally called forth criticism, both from those who disagree with it on principle, and from some who, sympathising with its spirit, yet for one reason or another have questioned its present

⁸ Bishop of Argyll, *Charge*, 1886, p. 14.

⁹ *Charge*, 1888, p. 14. In the same year, 1887, the Bishop of Argyll also issued for private use a 'Form for the conditional Baptism and Confirmation of persons seek-

ing admission into the Church,' compiled from the Book of Common Prayer and the Service Book authorised in 1843 by Bishop Torry, of St. Andrew's.

¹ *Charge*, 1889, *Scottish Guardian*, Sept. 13, 1889.

expediency. But the bishop's own convictions on the point are very strong, and he says, speaking of his anxiety in the matter: 'It is some consolation to me to know that my practice (whatever may be said of the theories on which it is founded) is in harmony, in this respect at any rate, with the practice of the overwhelming majority of the bishops of Christ's Church throughout the world. For, outside the limits of our communion, into which, on this particular point, much unauthorised laxity has been allowed to creep, I know of no bishops who would, without conditional baptism, admit to confirmation or to communion, persons who have been baptized by ministers in orders that they disallowed, or by lay persons not in communion with the Church, according to their definition of the expression.'²

This exercise of discipline in the diocese of Argyll and the Isles, has attracted fresh attention, in Scotland, to the whole question of the minister of baptism, and has already led to a few contributions to the literature of the subject.³

Here the history of the controversy pauses, but obviously it is not closed. As long as a point such as this is open at all to differences of view, there are sure periodically to be new disputes upon it. Some day

² *Charge*, 1888, p. 14.

³ The Charges of the Bishop of Argyll in 1886 and 1888, that of the Bishop of Edinburgh in 1888, and several letters in the *Scottish Guardian* in 1887 and 1888. Some of these, strongly against lay baptism, by the Rev. F. Nutcombe Oxenham, were reprinted in 1887,

under the title, 'Ten Letters on Lay Baptism.' A second edition, rewritten and enlarged throughout, was published in 1888, with the title, 'Lay Baptism, An Inquiry into the spiritual value and validity of that ceremony.' It has a lengthy Appendix, in reply to the Bishop of Edinburgh's Charge.

perhaps it will be otherwise. But the time is not yet ripe for a final settlement. The Church is incapacitated by its divisions from a united agreement, and no section of it would be competent by itself to enunciate a sufficient dogmatic statement. It was a wise act of self-control when the lower house of Convocation, in 1712, refused to entertain the proposition for a formal decree on the question, because ‘the validity of such baptism is a point which the catholic Church, and the Church of England in particular, hath hitherto avoided to determine by any synodical declaration.’⁴ Complicated as the question is now by the difficulties introduced into it by nonconformity, it is too grave, too doubtful, and involves too important issues, for any one portion of the Church by itself to decide authoritatively that unauthorised baptism is definitely valid, or definitely invalid. Such a declaration requires a larger concourse. Indeed nothing less than a general council would be competent so positively to decide it. The evils of a precipitate judgment would be far greater than those of uncertainty and differences of opinion.

⁴ See *ante*, p. 234.

CHAPTER XIII.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS.

Varieties of opinion and practice—Means of remedy : rebaptism ; confession of faith ; penance ; confirmation ; conditional baptism—Cases of irregularity as to the minister : bishops, priests, deacons ; heretics and schismatics ; lay churchmen, in danger of death, in the colonies, &c. ; women ; heathen or unbaptized ; dissenters—Cases which cannot be remedied : ordination of the unbaptized ; communions of the unbaptized ; the mercy of God—Remedies for dissenters' baptism : confirmation ; rites of reconciliation ; conditional baptism.

No one who has laboured through the tedious history of this question of the minister of baptism will presume to dogmatise rashly as to what the united mind of the Church is likely to be on irregular baptism, in every respect, if he reflects upon the variety of opinions which have been expressed at different times and in different places, and if he weighs carefully the wording of decrees and canons on the subject, with a view of marking not only what they say, but also what they leave unsaid. At present the matter has never really come before a general council. Therefore it has been open to the several parts of the Church to decide difficulties according to the exigencies of their own age and circumstances. These decisions are not necessarily final. The promise that what the Church binds or looses on earth shall be bound or loosed in heaven is one which, in its degree, belongs to every portion of the Church, acting in its own

proper jurisdiction, so long as nothing is done in opposition to catholic or universal rule. But these local enactments are partial, and liable to a larger revision. Meanwhile they hold good for those who live under them. The inevitable result, in a question like this, is that a baptism may be valid and efficacious at one place or time, which is invalid and ineffectual at another. This has been an offence to some. There is, however, nothing extraordinary in it, nor is the difficulty peculiar to baptism. The conditions of validity of the great initial sacrament are, no doubt, so important, that it seems as if it might be desirable for the Church to arrive at a common consent upon what is to be required for the qualification of the minister. But as a matter of fact there is no unanimous decree to which to appeal; and the very divisions of Christendom, which make the need felt the more, are the obstacle which prevents its enactment.

Without, then, endeavouring to discover a uniform law throughout the whole Church, and without comparing the relative merits of different disciplines, it is enough to ascertain what is the rule under which we live ourselves. It must be admitted that in the English communion we are without very explicit instruction of a ready kind, accessible to everyone to read at will. Neither modern canons nor Prayer Book give anything to guide an ordinary parish priest about how he should act in reference to dissenters' baptism; and, since the Hampton Court conference, there is nothing to make it clear what he should teach and do with regard to baptism by Church laymen in necessity. At the same time, it may be possible, from a survey of the history, to arrive at conclusions sufficiently definite

for practical purposes, pending an authoritative judgment.

The consideration resolves itself into the inquiry of what means the Church has in her hands for the remedy of irregularities in baptism.

If a baptism is absolutely and essentially invalid, she knows of no remedy except simple rebaptism, or rather baptism, for the original ceremony was no real baptism at all. The cases of unquestioned invalidity are, however, only those in which the matter or the form have been faulty. The entire Church agrees, and always has agreed, that if the matter be not water, and the three Persons be not named, it is no valid sacrament whatever. The person is merely unbaptized.

The question of the rightful minister of baptism does not come under the category of undisputed invalidity, because no universal consent has been arrived at. It falls under the head of baptism which is in some cases irregular in administration yet valid in essentials, and in others of doubtful validity. For the first the Church has at her disposal various rites by which she supplies defects or condones errors; for the second she uses, in some instances at least in the West, conditional baptism.

We need to consider what the remedial measures of the Church are, and what is their exact effect; and then we may be in a position to examine the several kinds of irregularity of ministry, and to determine what ought to be applied to each, in order to remove its disabilities.

In early ages some were reconciled to the Church by a mere open confession of the true faith. This was the method usually adopted for the Nestorians, Euty-

chians, Monothelites, Iconoclasts, and other such heretics.¹ Many of them had been baptized in the catholic Church, and their subsequent lapse could not invalidate their original baptism. All had at any rate been baptized by real priests. Such a method of reception can have little place as a remedy for defects in the minister. It clearly implies the certain validity of the baptism that had been bestowed. No subjective act of orthodox confession, or renunciation of error, can possibly remedy an inherent defect in the administration of the sacrament itself. It may be thought to set free the graces of baptism, where the moral disposition of the person has previously hindered their action; but in order to this the full gift of baptism must be there, although perhaps in a dormant condition. The irregularities it can meet must be in the subject, not in the minister, of baptism.

A more formal way of receiving those who came from heresy was by imposition of hands, after submission to penance. This was the most ancient system. It was already old in the third century, and is mentioned by the Popes Stephen, Siricius and Innocent, by St. Augustine, by the councils of Nicæa and Arles, and many other authorities.² Its effect may go beyond that of a subjective confession, in that it gives something

¹ Conc. Alex., 362, *Epist. Synod.*; Conc. Hispal. II., 618, can. 12; Conc. Trull., 691, can. 95; Leo, *Ad Aquil. Episc.* Ep. i. 2; *Ad Episc. Afric.* Ep. xii. 6, &c.; Greg. Mag. *Ad Quiric.* Ep. xi. lxxvii. See Morinus, *De Pœn.* ix. xii.; Martene, *De Ant. Rit.* III. vi. 6; Smith and Cheetham, *Dict. Christ. Ant.*, Art. 'Heresy,' p. 769.

² Euseb. VII. ii.; Stephen ap. Cyp.

Ep. lxxiv. [lxxiii.] 1; Siricius, *Ad Episc. Afric.* Ep. v. 2; Inn. *Ad Victric.* Ep. ii. 8, *Ad Alex. Episc.* Ep. xxiv. 3; Aug. *De Baptismo*, III. xvi. 21, v. xxiii. 33; Conc. Nic. I. can. 8; Conc. Arelat. I. can. 8. See Morinus, ix. xii.; Martene, III. vi. 6; *Dict. Christ. Ant.*, Art. 'Heresy,' p. 769.

from the ministry, by virtue of the laying on of hands. But it obviously presupposes the validity of the former baptism. Therefore St. Cyprian and the Carthaginian bishops, when they disallowed the validity of heretical baptism, denied that laying on of hands could have any effect in remedying its fault. In their opinion the people in question were unbaptized, and remained unbaptized equally when they had received the imposition of hands.³ Penance may correct an irregular, but valid, baptism. It cannot touch a baptism which is really invalid.

A third form of reconciliation was unction, or the imposition of hands, not in penance, but for the purpose of bestowing the grace of the Holy Ghost. It is difficult to be sure in all cases when, so used, it signified confirmation. Sometimes it certainly did; but sometimes also it seems to have stood for an inferior rite of reception. Most often, but not exclusively, unction was employed in the East, and laying on of hands in the West. Thus the Eastern council of Laodicea, in 375, the general council of Constantinople, in 381, and the council in Trullo, in 691, prescribe unction. So does St. Basil. The Western council of Arles, in 314, and the Popes Siricius, Innocent, and Leo, speak of imposition of hands, the latter in particular identifying it with confirmation. St. Augustine, too, repeatedly dwells on the lack of the Spirit from baptism by heretics, and says the want is supplied by laying on of hands. An ancient Greek Euchologion, quoted by Morinus, mentions both unction and laying on of hands. So do the Western councils of Orange, in 441,

³ Cyp. *Ep.* lxxi. [lxx.] 2; Conc. Carthag. in Aug. *De Bapt.* vi. xv. 24, xxix. 55.

and the second of Arles, in 452. St. Gregory, writing broadly, says that Arians received the Holy Spirit upon reconciliation, by means of unction in the East, and imposition of hands in the West. Later authorities continue to speak in like terms.⁴

Of course any baptized person requires confirmation. Therefore converts from heresy might need to be confirmed. But as spoken of by these ancient authorities, the rite of unction or laying on of hands seems to have been regarded somewhat in the light of supplying defects in heretical baptism. As Morinus sums up their teaching: ‘Confirmation is the perfecting of baptism, and increases and completes the grace conferred in baptism; so that the baptized person is confirmed and established in the faith by the sacrament. Although baptism given by heretics may be inefficacious, and by itself does not bring grace and the Holy Spirit, by means of confirmation it vivifies and grows fruitful in the mind of the converted heretic.’ This effect of confirmation, however, follows less from the rite itself than from the reconciliation of which it is the expression. It can confer no gifts peculiar to baptism, but it may set free the dormant gifts of a valid, though irregular, baptism. ‘Not only,’ says Morinus again, ‘does baptism always precede confirmation, but also the baptismal grace, at all events according to its proper nature, is prior to the grace of confirmation.’⁵ An unbaptized person is

⁴ Conc. Laod. can. 7; Conc. Const. can. 7; Conc. Trull. can. 95; Conc. Arelat. I. can. 8; II. can. 17; Conc. Arausic. can. 1; Basil, *Ep. ad Amphil.* can. 1; Aug. *De Bapt.* v. xxiii. 33; Siric. *Ad Himer. Episc.* Ep. i. 2; Inn. *Ad Alex. Episc.* Ep.

xxiv. 3; Leo, *Ad Nicet.* Ep. clix. 7, *Ad Neon. Raven.* Ep. clxvi. 2, *Ad Rustic.* Ep. clxvii. 18; Greg. *Ad Quiric.* Ep. xi. lxxvii. See Morinus, ix. ix., x., xi.; Martene, III. vi. 4, 5; *Dict. Christ. Ant.* vol. i. p. 768.

⁵ Morinus, *De Pæn.* ix. xi. 9.

incapable of confirmation. It completes a sacrament which must be there already to be completed. Therefore St. Cyprian and his associates, looking at the rite of laying on of hands from the point of view of conferring the Holy Ghost, declined to allow that it could possibly do this to heretics who came to be received into the catholic Church, because they needed first to be regenerated by a true baptism.⁶ It is necessary to dwell upon this distinctly, because the office of confirmation, in satisfying the deficiencies of an improper baptism, has been overstated, as will presently be seen. It cannot touch a case where the irregular baptism was absolutely invalid. ‘The sacred oracles,’ says Laurence, ‘give us not the least encouragement, either in plain words, or by good inferences to be drawn from such as are not so plain, to believe that this rite of the imposition of hands, with respect to baptized persons, was ever ordained but to be performed on those only who were before truly and validly baptized. . . . As for the Church of England, she gives us not the least intimation of any efficacy in the imposition of the bishop’s hand to give validity to such baptisms as are supposed to be partly invalid before; for her office of confirmation is made only for persons validly baptized.’⁷

These, or such-like rites, can only be applied to cases where the baptism has been of unquestioned validity. There is one other course, however, provided, which meets the difficulties of a baptism of uncertain validity. Conditional baptism was a resource devised in later times, to be applied when baptizing without

⁶ Cyp. *Ep.* lxxiv. [lxxiii.] 7, lxxv. [lxxiv.] 12; Conc. Carth. in Aug. *De Bapt.* vi. xii. 18, xxxi. 59.

⁷ Laurence, *Lay Baptism Invalid*, pp. 80, 81.

qualification might seem to run the risk of repeating the sacrament, while doing nothing ran the risk of leaving a person unbaptized. The earliest known reference to it is in the statutes of St. Boniface, Bishop of Mayence, in the first half of the eighth century. The words run: 'If there is doubt concerning any, whether they are baptized, let them be baptized without any scruple; but with these words prefixed, I do not rebaptize thee, but if thou art not yet baptized, I baptize thee, In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'⁸ Similar injunctions are found with frequency in the Western mediæval canons. Eventually the form took a briefer shape, common to both the Roman and the English office. The Roman Ritual orders it to be used generally, 'if it may be doubted whether the infant has been baptized.'⁹ The English Prayer Book says, 'If they which bring the infant to the Church do make such uncertain answers to the priest's questions, as that it cannot appear that the child was baptized with water, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (which are essential parts of baptism), then let the priest baptize it in the form before appointed for public baptism of infants, saving that at the dipping of the child in the font, he shall use this form of words, If thou art not already baptized, N. I baptize thee, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

⁸ Si de aliquibus dubium sit, utrum sint baptizati, absque ullo scrupulo baptizentur: his tamen verbis præmissis, Non te rebaptizo, sed si nondum es baptizatus, ego te baptizo, In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti.—Bonif. Mogunt. *Statuta*. See Martene, *De Ant.*

Rit. i. i. 16 (10), where there are other references.

⁹ Si vero dubitatur, an infans fuerit baptizatus, utatur hac forma: N. si non es baptizatus, ego te baptizo in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus sancti.—*Rit. Rom. Ordo Baptismi Parvulorum*.

Ghost. Amen.' Maskell thought an English clergyman would have no right to use this hypothetical form under any other circumstances than those contemplated in this rubric. 'If,' he says, 'the essential parts of the sacrament, the matter and the form, can clearly be shown to have been rightly observed, the Church of England does not suffer the hypothetical form of baptism to be used.'¹ But this does not follow. The rubric says the water and the words are 'essential parts,' but it does not say they are *the* essential parts, exclusively. If there is any doubt whatever of a reasonable kind, it would appear to be perfectly within the provision of the English Book to use the conditional form.

It only remains now to consider the actual cases of irregular baptism which are liable to occur, with such suggestions as to their treatment as the past history seems to offer.

There are some minor irregularities concerning the minister, which in no way affect the person baptized, although they may involve the person who baptizes in a breach of ecclesiastical discipline. Bishops are the chief ministers of baptism within their own dioceses. Priests, by virtue of their ordination, are regular ministers of baptism, but exercise their right by commission from the bishops within the several cures to which they are licensed and appointed. A breach of this discipline of jurisdiction is irregular, except that a tacit consent is always understood to be given by bishops for occasional ministrations beyond the ordinary sphere. Such irregularity cannot, however,

¹ Maskell, *Holy Baptism*, p. 220; comp. p. 388.

have any effect upon the sacramental grace of the baptism conferred.

Deacons, also apparently by their ordination, receive the power to baptize, with the disciplinary restriction, very explicitly stated in the English ordinal, that they are only to do it 'in the absence of the priest.' Since the authority is probably extended to deacons mainly with a view to necessity, a deacon should abstain from baptizing when 'the absence of the priest' can be reasonably avoided. The deacon's permission is also only 'to baptize infants.' The baptism of 'such as are of riper years' belongs to 'the bishop or whom he shall appoint for that purpose,' which generally includes the parish priest. Only very urgent necessity would justify a deacon in giving adult baptism. Irregularity in ministration by a deacon would not, however, damage the baptism itself.

At the time of the first great heresies on the Blessed Trinity, the mind of the Church, at any rate in the East and in Africa, was against accepting heretical baptism, and less emphatically against accepting schismatical baptism. In both cases the ministers who bestowed it had been episcopally ordained, and therefore were actually bishops and priests. That they were not in communion with the orthodox body did not take away their sacerdotal character. The ancient repudiation of their baptisms does not seem to have rested on doubts as to their priesthood. It rather depended on the sense that baptism into a Name heretically interpreted was not baptism into the true Name of the Blessed Trinity. It was a baptism into heresy, not into the catholic Church. The maturer mind of the West has adopted the safer theory that 'the unworthiness of the minister

hinders not the effect of the sacrament;'² and this whether the unworthiness be of faith or of morals. Even the East, while adhering to the other view in principle, has in practice had somewhat to modify it. Hence, baptism, at any rate among us Westerns, is to be accepted as thoroughly valid, if its minister is an episcopally ordained person. This is so, whether the question be one of heresy or of schism. But though the baptism holds good, its disorderliness is so great that some form of reconciliation seems desirable, when the baptized person becomes alive to the irregularity. St. Augustine would have held that its spiritual effect is in abeyance until formal reconciliation with the Church has removed his disabilities.

Baptism by laymen presents great theoretic difficulties. As an individual, a devout lay churchman may seem to be a much fitter channel of grace than a heretical or schismatical priest, if personal fitness were the credentials of the ministry. But, as Waterland, Laurence, and others have abundantly pointed out, the only accredited way of receiving a commission to minister sacraments is by ordination from a bishop. Any proper commission to administer baptism would make a man a cleric, and take him out of the category of laymen. Tertullian recognised the force of this argument so strongly that he rested his support of lay baptism on the doctrine of the priesthood of the laity.³ This, however, is a futile effort to escape from the difficulty. It has already been shown that any such theory would involve an unwarrantable confusion of ideas as to the meaning of the term priesthood, as applied to the

² Art. xxvi.

³ See *ante*, pp. 33, 39.

laity and to the clergy.⁴ The latter alone hold a commission to bestow sacramental grace from God to man.⁵ Baptism is a sacrament of grace, and its administration distinctly belongs to the priesthood of the clergy. On no grounds of logical reasoning can it be made to fall within the functions of an unordained minister, according to the ordinary principles of sacramental rule.

Clear as this is in theory, there is on the other side the invincible argument of Church usage. It would be idle to dispute either its extent, or its force. For fourteen centuries unanimously, and more or less before, in the West, and now even in the East, laymen have been suffered, and constantly admonished, to baptize in circumstances of danger and necessity. In face of this historical fact, the negative position which the English Prayer Book was made to take in 1604, by the omission of all sanction to any but a 'lawful minister,' cannot weigh very considerably. Nor can theoretic objections overthrow the actual right of the Church to 'bind' and to 'loose' the discipline even of the channel of the sacraments. It is impossible to justify the permission by simple reason; but, until there is some definite repeal of its long and wide acceptance, it seems inevitable that one must acknowledge the power of a Church layman to baptize in circumstances of urgent necessity.

Ordinarily this urgent necessity is understood to mean the imminent danger of death. Except in actual childbirth, the occasions for lay baptism ought to be extremely rare in a country like England, especially if baptism were not delayed beyond the time prescribed

⁴ See *ante*, p. 15.

⁵ Matt. xxviii. 18, 19; John xx. 21.

in the Prayer Book. Even when a child becomes suddenly and dangerously ill, it is seldom the case that a clergyman cannot be procured in time, if an effort is made. Congregations should be taught, perhaps more than they are, that, at any hour of the day or night, at any amount of personal inconvenience to himself or to others, the priest is to be summoned, rather than his ministry dispensed with. All should be provided in readiness, and only if he fails to arrive when the danger has become momentarily imminent, should the layman proceed. His hesitation must not, however, extend to the point of risking dissolution before the baptism is accomplished; and his own impression of the extremity of the peril is a sufficient justification for his action, even if he should afterwards prove to have been mistaken. Nor, with the Church's mind before him, must he be deterred by private scruples or logical reasonings from fulfilling this office of charity. The responsibility is not his, but the Church's. If there be a choice of persons, a communicant is to be preferred to one whose churchmanship is incomplete. Except in great extremity, the father should not baptize, according to mediæval canons; but this direction had much of its origin in the obsolete idea that baptizing established an affinity with the child which interfered with the marriage relation, and therefore a communicant parent would certainly now be preferable to a non-communicant bystander.

In the event of death, the whole present opinion of the Church is that lay Church baptism entitles the person not only to Christian burial, but also to be remembered among the faithful departed. If, on the other hand, there is recovery, the Orthodox Greek Church would rebaptize, the Russians would not, nor

would Rome, at any rate in theory. An argument for rebaptism may be drawn from a literal interpretation of the present wording of the English office, which only explicitly requires the priest to supply the reception alone, when the child has been baptized by a 'lawful minister.' But it may be doubted whether this is the intention, and many would hesitate to baptize where the previous lay baptism was duly performed in urgent danger. If any hold a different opinion, there is, however, no prohibition of a conditional baptism, and no danger of sacrilege in bestowing it. Some feel very strongly that this is the course which should be taken. 'If I were a layman,' writes the Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, 'I should most certainly baptize a dying person in case of necessity. But if afterwards the person recovered, I should not rest till I had got an ordained minister to give conditional baptism, lest my want of ministerial authority should have rendered my act invalid.'⁶ Another, deep in theological lore, John Walter Lea, himself a layman, thought most decidedly that this was the proper course. 'In my earlier student days,' he wrote to Mr. Baldwin, 'I was disposed, with youthful impatience and intolerance of every doubt, to reject lay baptism absolutely. Years and thought have modified this fervour to some extent, and now my practical conclusion is, I think, the same as yours. In case of *urgency* I should essay "to baptize," but hypothetically:—"If I have the power, and if it be the will of Almighty God, so far as it is given to me, I baptize," &c., always pressing the propriety of conditional baptism should life continue. At the same time I cannot see any ground on which to conclude for its validity,

⁶ Bishop of Argyll, MS. note, Jan. 1889.

and should act solely in deference to the great current of opinion in the Church.’⁷

There are some, as has been seen, who would extend the plea of necessity to the circumstances of those in foreign lands, when they are far from any probable prospect of the ministry of a priest. Since this is a case not contemplated by the canons, and of doubtful ‘urgency,’ the recommendation of conditional baptism, as soon as a priest may be had, will have still greater force than when the urgency has been the danger of death specifically mentioned in Church decrees as justifying lay baptism. Still more will the advice apply when the layman’s act has not been prompted by any sufficient degree of necessity. His power to baptize can only be claimed to hold good so far as the Church has formally sanctioned it. The canonical permission is never given without the qualification that only urgency calls for his interference in a ministry which cannot ordinarily be his. Consequently, in spite of the private opinion of St. Augustine and others to the contrary, it may be at least safest to use conditional baptism, when the case has been one which seems scarcely to fall within the necessity contemplated by the mediæval canons.

Whatever objections lie against the ministry of baptism by lay men hold with greater force against its ministry by women. Not only are they not ministerial priests, but by their sex they are disqualified from ever being such. At the same time the occasions when lay baptism is necessary will occur more often to women than to men, since they will chiefly arise at the moment of childbirth. Hence arose the special permission to

⁷ J. W. Lea to Rev. E. C. Baldwin, June 27, 1886.

midwives, which took an exaggerated form in the ecclesiastical licenses of the later middle ages. The same canons which permit lay men to baptize permit women also, if no man can perform the office. Those, therefore, especially who assist at confinements should know how to act in emergency, and should not fail to baptize if they believe the peril to be urgently grave.⁸ The general opinion is that their baptism should be accepted, even if the child lives. Nevertheless, as in the case of baptism by laymen, the English office seems to make it possible to give hypothetical baptism, without contradicting the letter, or probably the spirit, of the Prayer Book.

To allow baptism by the heathen or the unbaptized no doubt follows logically from confining the essentials strictly to the matter and the words. But there is certainly something very anomalous in the idea that one who is himself outside the divine covenant can admit others into it. The acceptance of such baptism is neither so early nor so common as that of lay Church baptism. It was only as scholastic theology grew that it became generally recognised. The occasion for it can rarely arise in a Christian country. But in heathen lands, where missionary stations are far apart and priests few in number, it may well happen that a

⁸ The canonists and schoolmen enter into minute directions about baptizing infants during the process of their birth. All say that a child may not be baptized in its mother's womb. It may, however, be baptized if it is partly born. If this baptism was applied to the head, it was generally agreed that it should not be repeated, but if only some

other member received the water, conditional baptism was usually advised, if the child survived long enough for it to be conferred. This is the present rule of the Roman Church, carefully laid down. *Rit. Rom. De Sacram. Bapt.* See also Lyndwood, *Provinciale*, p. 246; Maskell, *Holy Baptism*, p. 71.

catechumen, who is being prepared for baptism, may find himself in the position of choosing between baptizing a fellow catechumen or letting him die unbaptized. Probably, however, it would never be thought wise to instruct people to do this, and without special instruction they would not be likely to attempt it. The question is, therefore, almost purely a speculative one. In the event of its actually happening, no one would condemn the pious intention of the baptizer. The baptism would be entitled to the benefit of doubt as to its value. But, supposing the person should recover, conditional baptism at least would be used to secure the validity of the sacrament.

Lastly, there is dissenters' baptism, which presents the gravest difficulties, and yet occurs with the greatest frequency of all the kinds of irregular baptism. There is everything in it to challenge objection. It is lay baptism, as being administered by those who have not received episcopal ordination; it is schismatical baptism, as being administered by those who have separated themselves from catholic communion; it is heretical baptism, certainly in those sects whose faith in the Blessed Trinity is defective, and possibly in all, since they reject the article of the creed which confesses the 'one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.' It lacks, moreover, the sanction of the Church, which is claimed for lay baptism in extremity and is the plea on which its validity is justified: the dissenter baptizes in apparent opposition to the Church's laws and discipline.⁹

⁹ Apart from the question of the minister, there are serious doubts often as to the careful use of the due form and matter among dissenters. This has already been mentioned as

regards Scotch Presbyterians, when they sprinkle from a high pulpit without any particular caution to secure that the water touches the person at all. It is the case, with

Therefore, even those who are warm in their defence of baptism by lay churchmen have little to say for dissenting baptism. 'To presume to do it in ordinary cases,' says Kelsall, 'in defiance of the Christian priesthood, as our schismatical lay preachers do, is what we all readily agree, there is no more ground for in Scripture, than there is for lay ordination, lay absolution, &c. Concerning such usurpers Mr. W[aterland] and we are all of the same opinion: and, were there room or leisure for it, or were it pertinent to my design, I should willingly join with him in treating such acts of sacrilegious impiety and presumption with all the severity of language he can desire.' Yet Kelsall maintained its external validity, treating it only, after the manner of St. Augustine, as inefficacious outside the Church. 'Whatsoever adult,' he says, 'shall choose to receive baptism from such an usurper, knowing that he is not episcopally ordained, receives only the outward sign, not the grace of the sacrament; because his choice of such a baptism (preferably to one that is truly catholic and regular) puts him into a state of schism, which state is an insuperable bar against the baptismal grace, till it be removed by repentance and reconciliation to the Church. But such an irregular administration can be no prejudice to those who die in their infancy, because of the innocency of that age, and their

reference to the form, in many English sects, especially among their less educated and responsible preachers. Instances of baptism in the name of Jesus, or with a mere text, have been found where the accuracy of the form would generally be assumed without question. An imperfect faith in baptism, and

an imperfect discipline as to ecclesiastical rites, leaves room for very great inaccuracies. It should scarcely ever be taken for granted that the form and matter have been exactly used by dissenters. Very minute inquiry should always be made as to these points, before they are relied upon.

not concurring in the irregularity. Nevertheless, though in the case of an adult so baptized the baptismal grace be wanting, the outward administration (if with due matter and form) is not altogether invalid. Consequently I distinguish betwixt an inefficacious and invalid administration.’¹ Kelsall would have thought formal reconciliation sufficient.

Others have felt that the irregularity of dissenters’ baptism reaches a point which imperils its validity. Mr. Baldwin, holding this view, enumerates distinctly the inherent differences between it and baptism by a lay churchman in necessity. ‘The layman,’ he says, ‘is himself a member of her upon whom God has put His Name. He is himself inside the Church, and in communion with the ministry of the Church; he might, therefore, acting under the protection of the bishop, and as the lawful minister’s deputy, obtain from Christ the key of the Church for that one moment: but the case is wholly and radically different when a “minister” of a religious sect presumes to “baptize.” He is *not* in communion with the ministry of the Church; he is *not* acting under the protection of the bishop, but rather in opposition to the bishop; he does *not* act as the deputy of the lawful minister; neither does he baptize because of extreme danger of death. He takes upon himself the office of baptizing, simply and solely because for some reason or other he imagines himself, or is imagined by other people, to have a kind of ministerial power about him.’²

Some of these points may perhaps be open to a logically consistent reply. The dissenter is certainly

¹ Kelsall, in *Waterland’s Works*, vol. vi. pp. 99, 135.

² Baldwin, *A Matter of Life and Death*, p. 26.

not in full communion with the Church; but, granting that his own baptism is valid, his self-excommunication cannot wholly sever his connection with the Body of Christ. Consequently, he may be supposed to have inherited from the mother, whom he or his forefathers have forsaken, a measure of whatever right the laity have to baptize, and to be handing it on with increased irregularity, but still with a remote kind of validity. He does not act under the bishop; and this want of episcopal authority is justly made much of by opponents of dissenters' baptism. Dr. Brett, speaking expressly of their 'pretended baptism,' says, 'Supposing bishops could authorise or commission laymen to baptize in cases of necessity; yet, since the power of administering baptism is lodged solely and entirely in the bishops, and only derivatively conveyed from them to others, those to whom it is not derivatively conveyed cannot baptize. Therefore, unauthorised, uncommissioned laymen cannot baptize, having derived no authority from the bishops to do so, in whom the sole entire power of administering baptism is lodged.'³ But, then, the only proper method of authorising anybody to administer a sacrament is by ordination. Consequently, if it is conceded at all that a Church layman can baptize by tacit permission, without direct authority, it seems but a little step further, judged merely as a question of commission, to allow that a dissenter may also baptize, with however much greater irregularity. Neither has received the commission in the only way that it can ordinarily be received.

Something, too, may be said even for the dissenter's Church intention when he baptizes. He does not act

³ Brett, *Inquiry*, p. 8.

as the acknowledged deputy of the lawful minister. He would repudiate any idea of mission from a bishop, any suggestion that he was the representative of the parish priest, and any hint of connection with the catholic Church of the place. Yet, in a high sense, he believes himself to be acting as the deputy of Christ. His intention is to do that which our Lord commanded to be done, and this might seem to satisfy a reasonable doctrine of intention. ‘The minister of a sacrament,’ says St. Thomas Aquinas, ‘acts as the representative of the whole Church of which he is the minister. And the intention of the Church is expressed in the words he uses, which is sufficient for the perfection of the sacrament, unless the contrary is expressed outwardly on the part of the minister, or the recipient, of the sacrament.’⁴ The dissenter’s intention perhaps would not fall short of this, were it not for the essential flaw that he lacks the orders which would make him a true ‘representative of the Church.’

The most fatal point is that the Church, when she has admitted lay baptism, never contemplated such a use of it as is involved in dissenters’ baptisms. It is straining the permission, therefore, to an extreme extent, if it is supposed to cover what no canon or decree was intended to sanction. There is not even, usually, the plea of urgent necessity; and that is the only plea upon which baptism by Church laymen has ever been permitted, although sometimes the act has been condoned when the circumstances did not properly justify the layman in doing it.

The sum of the matter is that serious doubts may be raised against the validity of dissenters’ baptisms.

⁴ Aquinas, *Summa*, III. lxiv. 8.

Their parallel with other irregular baptisms, which have sometimes been accepted, is sufficiently recognisable for it to be impossible summarily to reject them as certainly invalid. Yet it is equally impossible to describe them as certainly valid. ‘If what I have said,’ wrote one of the controversialists of the eighteenth century, ‘may be of use to persuade any dissenter, who has not been baptized by a lawful minister, to examine the grounds upon which he believes his baptism valid, and to examine them with that seriousness and impartiality which an affair that so nearly concerns the eternal salvation of his soul requires, this I dare be very confident in; he will find more reason to doubt of his being baptized according to the institution of Christ, than for any other doubt whatever upon which he separates from the established Church.’⁵ It is doubt only, which is laid to the charge of these improper baptisms, but doubt of no frivolous or captious character. ‘The whole point,’ says Mr. Baldwin, ‘seems to be this. It cannot be denied by any person of competent knowledge that there is a *doubt* as to the validity of dissenting baptism. No man in his senses would say that he is absolutely certain that dissenters’ baptism is, in God’s sight, and the Church’s sight, of as absolutely certain validity as baptism by a priest in full communion with the Church. But, surely, if there be but a bare possibility that it may not be, in God’s sight, equal to true baptism, piety and obedience require that that, even remotest, possibility may be avoided. And to many thoughtful minds there is more than a possibility, though it may not amount to probability; while with many others

⁵ *Remarks on two late sermons preached in the Cathedral of Salisbury, 1711, p. 23.*

it seems very likely that such baptisms are altogether inefficacious, and even null and void. In a word, if there be but a *chance* that a person baptized by a dissenter lacks something which a truly baptized person has, the chance of that lack should be removed.'⁶

The difficulty that many have felt in allowing the possibility of such a doubt as to the validity of dissenters' baptism is, that the consequences of its invalidity appear to them to be too serious to contemplate. For vast numbers, who have received no other kind of baptism, are living in external communion with the Church, and partaking at her altars, where they have no right if they are unbaptized. Their own personal salvation, too, would be in peril, while they themselves are blissfully unconscious of the defect. Worse than this, many have been ordained to the priesthood, of which they are incapable unless their baptism is valid. Consequently they are ministering what in truth may be no sacraments at all at their hands. Some have even been consecrated to the episcopate. It was said, at the time of the nonjuring controversy, that Bishop Burnet of Salisbury, Bishop Blackall of Exeter, Bishop Moore of Ely, and Bishop Fowler of Gloucester, all at the same period, had received their baptism from dissenting ministers. This appears to have been the case, also, with Bishop Butler, Archbishop Secker, Archbishop Tait, and doubtless several others. If their baptism was invalid, it follows, so it is urged, that they were no true bishops, and therefore could give no valid ordination. Thus, invalid baptisms, confirmations, absolutions, eucharists and ordinations may have been multiplied, until such confusion and uncertainty has crept in that

⁶ Rev. E. C. Baldwin, MS. note.

no one can be sure of the validity of any ministry whatsoever.⁷

Laurence, Brett, and Waterland sought to escape from this dilemma by maintaining that an unbaptized person may hold a true commission by ordination, and can validly administer sacraments to others, although he himself may be outside the covenant of grace.⁸ The theory was propounded with hesitation, and was received with very little favour. Hickee, who was on their side on the general question, thought it utterly unsound.⁹ The Decretum of Gregory laid down, on the authority of the fathers, that an unbaptized person cannot receive the character of holy orders. His ordination is invalid; and when his lack of baptism is discovered, he must be baptized and ordained afresh.¹ And this certainly seems the logical view. One who is without the fold can scarcely be a pastor of the sheep. One who is not in communion with the Body of Christ can scarcely be a channel of the sacraments which proceed from Him.

Some have sought to find a solution of the difficulty in the other great sacrament of salvation. Dionysius of Alexandria was afraid to baptize one who had clearly received an invalid baptism from heretics, because he had 'long been a partaker of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.'² That is, he thought that the holy eucharist would have supplied what had not been given in holy baptism. As the Bishop of Argyll

⁷ See Abbott, *De Bapt.* ii.; Whitgift, *Works*, Parker Soc., vol. ii. p. 527.

⁸ Laurence, *Lay Baptism Invalid*, pp. 128-140; Brett, *Inquiry*, p. 111; Waterland, *Works*, vol. vi.

pp. 215-226.

⁹ Hickee, *Letter to Author of Lay Baptism Invalid*, p. xxxvii.

¹ *Decretum*, III. tit. xliii.

² Euseb. *Hist. Eccles.* vii. ix. See *ante*, p. 64.

expresses it: 'It has also been suggested that persons who, unknown to themselves, have received an invalid or insufficient baptism, and who have subsequently approached the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, with right dispositions, cannot by any reasonable supposition be shut out from the benefits promised to worthy communicants. And what do these benefits include? Nothing less than that the worthy receivers are "very members incorporate" in the mystical Body of the Son of God.'³ With the conclusion that those who are ignorant of the deficiency of their baptism are not excluded from the benefits of communicants, there is no reason to quarrel. But it may be questioned whether it is safe to put it in a form which implies that the communion of Christ's Body and Blood in the holy eucharist does for them that which ordinarily should be done by baptism. Each sacrament has its own proper gift. Regeneration is not attached to the sacrament of the altar; and if the grace of regeneration comes to one who has not been rightly baptized, it is scarcely to be attributed to the fact that he is a communicant.

A better explanation seems to be found in the goodness of God. If He uses human instruments, who are imperfect by nature, there may be the most implicit confidence that where the accurate ministrations has failed, through ignorance or accident, He will Himself supply in an extraordinary way what He generally gives by ordinary methods. It would be an intolerable doctrine that any should suffer permanent loss from an error of misapprehension, or that the whole structure of the ministry should be allowed to collapse through a

³ Bishop of Argyll, *Charge*, 1888, p. 24.

theological mistake. In such a case, God will certainly 'devise means, that His banished be not expelled from Him.'⁴

Even the sternest of the ancient advocates for severity of baptismal discipline allowed this. 'Some will say,' wrote St. Cyprian, 'What then will become of those who in times past, coming to the Church from heresy, were admitted without baptism? The Lord is able of His mercy to grant pardon, and not to sever from the gifts of His Church those who, being out of simplicity admitted to the Church, have in the Church fallen asleep.'⁵ The most emphatic of the eighteenth century controversialists said the same with regard to dissenters' baptism. 'Who are they,' asks Charles Leslie, the nonjuror, 'that have reason to expect God's extraordinary mercies out of the common methods of salvation, and to be made partakers of the inward without the outward baptism?' 'Those,' he says, in reply, 'who have been baptized by persons not lawfully ordained; and consequently they have received no baptism, having received it from those who had no commission to administer it, but who were guilty of the highest sacrilege in usurping such a sacred commission, not lawfully derived to them by a successive ordination from the apostles: but yet, through a general corruption of the times, such baptisms are suffered to pass; whereby the persons so baptized, swimming down the stream, do think their baptism to be valid, and therefore seek not for a rebaptization from those who are empowered to administer it: I say, where no such rebaptization is taught, and thereby the people know nothing of it, in such case their ignorance is in

⁴ 2 Sam. xiv. 14.

⁵ Cyp. *Ep.* lxxiii. 20 [lxxii. 23].

a manner invincible, and their sincerity and devotion in receiving no sacraments, yet thinking them true sacraments, may be accepted by God, and the inward grace conferred, and the defects in the outward and visible signs may be pardoned.’⁶ Laurence himself quotes this passage with approval; adding his own comment, that God ‘is infinite goodness itself, and will never punish any for what they never could help.’⁷ And Hickee agreed with him, saying, ‘We must have recourse to equity, which, in such cases of perfect, invincible ignorance, takes place in ecclesiastical as well as in civil cases, in divine as well as human laws.’⁸

No uneasiness need, therefore, be felt about irregular baptisms which are beyond reach. But this comfortable reflection does not the least exonerate us from doing whatever can be done to put doubtful baptisms which are within reach upon a secure footing. ‘Because there has once been error,’ says St. Cyprian, after speaking of his confidence in God’s mercy towards those whose false baptism could not be remedied, ‘men need not always err; since it becometh wise men, who fear God, gladly and unhesitatingly to obey the truth, when laid open and plainly seen, rather than pertinaciously and obstinately to contend for heretics against brethren and fellow bishops.’⁹ Or, as the Bishop of Argyll and the Isles says, viewing the later aspect of the question, ‘Though He has ordained His holy sacraments as the appointed means through which He saves and blesses us, it is evident He cannot Himself be fettered by His own laws, with regard to their opera-

⁶ Leslie, *Discourse on Water valid*, p. 102.
Baptism, Works, 1832, vol. vii.
p. 87.

⁸ Hickee, *Letter to Author, &c.*
p. xxxviii.

⁷ Laurence, *Lay Baptism In-*

⁹ Cyp. *Ep. lxxiii.* 20 [lxxii. 23].

tion. Though we are bound, yet He is not. Let us then ever keep this in mind. We are bound. Therefore, let us bring to bear the utmost rigour, and the most scrupulous exactness in all our dealings as to the administration of the holy sacraments. Christ is not bound. Therefore, let us confidently hope in His mercy, should we ever fail in our efforts to remedy what is doubtful or irregular.’¹

We have, then, to consider what is an adequate and sufficient remedy to apply to those who have received the wholly unauthorised baptism of dissenting ministers. Nathaniel Marshall maintained that the Church has full discretionary powers as to how she will deal with such baptism. ‘She may,’ he says, ‘confirm, *ex post facto*, an irregular ministrations of it. Without her allowance it will never avail for the remission of sins; but when any come to her, desiring such allowance, she may dispense with the repetition of it, though they did not receive it originally from her hands. Whether she should, or should not, dispense with it, seems to have been judged a prudential point, which we find to have been variously determined according to the different occasions and conjunctures of place and season.’² If, however, the Church is free so to act, and this ought scarcely to be disputed, her action towards these improper baptisms should be definite and distinct, so that at least there should be some kind of formal reconciliation, whereby she may set her seal on the candidate for reception, and assure him of the spiritual effects of the sacrament of baptism.

¹ Bishop of Argyll, *Charge*, 1886, p. 15.

heretical baptisms, Works of St. Cyprian, p. 268.

² Marshall, *Dissertation upon*

Many have looked to confirmation as an adequate rite for the purpose. Bishop Phillpotts, of Exeter, was one of these. He believed that dissenters' baptism could not convey all the gifts of the sacrament so long as it remained a baptism unaccepted by the Church. But he held that a person so baptized had a right to claim confirmation, and that when he was confirmed the defects of his baptism entirely disappeared.³ The Rev. Charles Warren, writing in 1841 upon Sir Herbert Jenner's burial judgment, said, 'As confirmation has always followed baptism, therefore it is generally decreed that all whose baptism was unauthorised shall be received by imposition of hands, which will confirm a valid baptism, or make good the invalid.' And that he did not use the term 'invalid' loosely, as equivalent merely to 'irregular,' is clear; for he proceeds, 'By the catholic confirmation of the bishop, the baptism, certainly irregular and perhaps invalid, becomes *ipso facto* perfect, valid, sacred and catholic.'⁴ Laurence says that this was the theory of some of the bishops of his own day, who administered confirmation 'upon this principle, that the baptism received by the confirmed person from the hands of dissenting teachers, who are laics, was not good and valid before confirmation, but made valid by confirmation.' Laurence adds, 'I absolutely deny the principle.'⁵

As a matter of argument, Laurence was right. Where, indeed, confirmation has been given and received in all good faith, as accomplishing the required end, the infinite goodness of God may doubtless have

³ Phillpotts, *Charge*, 1842, pp. 40, 48. *unauthorised Baptism*, pp. 15, 16.

⁵ Laurence, *Dissenters' Baptisms*

⁴ Warren, *Indeterminateness of* *null and void*, p. 49.

permitted that nothing should be left wanting. But it has already been seen that confirmation cannot, strictly, do anything for an invalid baptism. It can at most be a proper remedy for mere irregularity. The point about a dissenting ministry of baptism is, not only that its irregularity is very gross, but that its actual validity is not certain. Even as a correction of the irregularity it seems inadequate. Everyone is to be brought to confirmation. If those baptized by a lawful priest, and those baptized by an unlawful minister, are brought together to the rite, without distinction, practically dissenting baptism is put upon a level with that of the Church. To imagine a silent operation of confirmation to the dissenter, over and above its operation to the churchman, is not satisfactory. Dr. Hutton, writing in 1811, said a clergyman would be acting ignorantly and blamably if he presented a child for confirmation who had only been baptized by a dissenter.⁶ In the absence of express discipline upon the subject, such a remark seems stronger than perhaps is warranted. But a thoughtful consideration of the matter will certainly lead to the conclusion that something more full and definite than ordinary confirmation is desirable for those who have received dissenting baptism.

Bingham himself felt this, strongly as his own prejudices were enlisted on the side of the validity of lay baptism. His study of history had taught him that the Church's wont had been to reconcile heretics and schismatics by some formal discipline. Therefore he felt the unseemliness, at least, of accepting dissenters without any definite ceremony. 'There is one thing more,' he says, 'I would humbly beg leave to offer,

⁶ Hutton, *Remarks upon a late decision*, p. 13.

with all due respect, to the consideration of our superiors, legally assembled in Convocation; that is, whether it might not be proper to have a peculiar form of confirmation, or imposition of hands, for such as were baptized by heretics and schismatics, upon their return to the unity of the Church; considering what frequent occasion there is for such a form, by reason of great multitudes that have been baptized in heresy or schism, and are admitted into the Church upon repentance and renunciation of their errors without rebaptization. The ancient Church had such forms peculiar to this occasion: for they did not think confirmation was to be given exactly in the same way to those who were baptized by heretics or schismatics, as they did to those that were baptized in the Church; because though they did not esteem the baptism of such to be simply null and invalid, yet they looked upon it as deficient in several respects; and therefore they appointed proper forms for the confirmation of such, before they admitted them to the eucharist, upon their return to the Church.⁷ It may indeed be imagined that the ancient Church would look aghast at the easy reception of the sectarians of these days, with no species of solemn reconciliation. Some such ceremony as that which Bingham suggests would certainly be a step in the right direction. Yet in itself it would not be perfectly satisfactory. Confirmation will not bear dividing into two kinds. It is no proper remedy to apply to a baptism which lies under any suspicion of invalidity.

A readier and more sufficient resource is to be found in conditional baptism. Pending an authoritative decision to the contrary, dissenters' baptism is

⁷ Bingham, *Scholastical History*, Preface, *Works*, vol. viii. p. vii.

quite doubtful enough to warrant its application, while the very form in which the words are cast passes no final judgment on their rite. Nor does there seem any reason why it should not be legitimately used for this, as well as for other doubts. Hypothetical baptism, says Marshall, 'in all cases of doubt as to matter of *fact*, whether the child, or person, hath been baptized or no, is our undisputed rule of proceeding: why, then, may it not be so, where the matter of *right* is doubted, till the doubt at least be removed by a synodical sentence?'⁸

Such a method has the support of weighty names. Dr. Pusey, evidently alluding to cases which had come within his own knowledge, says, 'The practice now adopted by the Scotch Church,⁹ and in our own, with regard to persons baptized by such as are not only in schism, but never received any commission to baptize (a case to which there is no parallel in the early Church), unites the advantages of the Latin and Greek practice; of the Latin, in that it avoids the risk of real rebaptizing, which the ancients regarded as a profanation of the sacred Names; of the Greek, in that it does what in us lies, to provide that none of the blessings and grace of baptism be lost through our omission, and is an act of piety towards God, desiring that whatever may have hitherto been lacking, be supplied.'¹ Bishop Wordsworth, of Lincoln, was of the same mind. He wrote to Mr. Baldwin, who had asked his opinion, March 4, 1874, 'The Church has not condemned bap-

⁸ Marshall, *Dissertation on heretical baptisms*, p. 268.

⁹ This was written in 1842, after the passing of the Scotch canon on the subject, and before this was

changed into its present optional form. See *ante*, pp. 283, 284.

¹ Pusey, *Note to Tertullian*, Lib. of Fathers, vol. i. p. 297.

tism administered by laymen ; but I have no hesitation in saying, that if I had been baptized by a person whose commission to baptize was doubtful, I should desire to be baptized with the hypothetical form by a duly ordained minister.² And, on one occasion, he expressed himself willing to confirm over again, after conditional baptism, a person who had already received the rite of confirmation while she had only as yet been baptized by a dissenting minister.³

Whether conditional baptism can be insisted upon, under our present discipline, supposing the person is unwilling to receive it, may perhaps be questioned. But that it is desirable that it should be administered seems to be clear. For whatever may be said in favour of the validity of baptism by one who is not a lawful minister, in circumstances of urgency, it remains a fact that the ordinary baptism practised by dissenters has never received any sanction from the Church. It does not stand upon an assured footing. There is, therefore, a doubt ; and where there is a doubt, conditional baptism is the most reverent and appropriate remedy. It avoids presumptuous dogmatism on a debatable point, which the Church has not yet decided with authority. It is absolutely free from any danger of the sacrilege of iterating baptism, supposing the previous ceremony was really and completely valid. It satisfies the obligations

² Baldwin, *A Matter of Life and Death*, p. 39. Mr. Baldwin has kindly let me copy from the original letter. In his book it was written down from memory, during an absence in Africa, and there are some unimportant variations from the precise wording of the letter.

³ 'Wed. before Easter, 1877. If

you admit your candidate to holy communion on Easter Day (as being desirous to be confirmed), I think it is of less importance that she should be brought to confirmation ; but I should be quite ready to confirm her on your certificate of her fitness.'—Bishop Wordsworth to Rev. E. C. Baldwin.

of the clergy, who have inherited the charge, ‘Go *ye*, baptizing them,’ and who are therefore bound not to acquiesce in the usurpation of their office by those who have received no such commission. It satisfies the needs of the person, who thereby secures the full grace of the sacrament with a certainty which cannot be disputed. It is, also, perfectly loyal to both the letter and the spirit of the English formularies, which, if they do not positively condemn the irregularity of baptism administered without the Church’s permission, at least give it no explicit sanction, and thus put it in a very different position from that which is bestowed by her ordained and lawful ministers.

INDEX.

ABB

- ABBOTT, Archbishop, on lay baptism, 196; on unbaptized bishops, 313
- Aberdeen, Council of, 154, 162
- Absolution, analogy of, 16, 21, 25
- Addams, Dr., on burial cases, 254
- Admonition to Parliament, 191
- Adult baptism, 217, 218, 299
- Africa, custom as to heretical baptism, before Agrippinus, 55; reformed by, 55; under Cyprian, 57-64; arguments of bishops at Carthage, 65-69; custom after Cyprian, 64; bishops at Arles, 91; first council of Carthage, 92; Cyprian's decrees accepted by Trullan council, 116
- Agrippinus, bishop of Carthage, 55
- Alexander, Bishop, and story of Athanasius, 88, 135
- Alexandria, Council of, 293
- Alexius, king, and synod at Moscow, 201
- Alger, monk of Cluni, 142
- Amazon disarmed, pamphlet on dissenters' baptism, 262
- Ambrose, St., on power of keys, 20, 21; on commission from bishops, 75; on heretical baptism, 93
- Ambrose, Pseudo, *see* Hilary the Deacon
- American Church; Prayer Book on minister, 279; declaration of bishops, 280; dissenters' baptism, 280; rebaptism of bishops, 280, 281; general opinion on lay and dissenters' baptism, 282
- Ananias, baptism of Saul, 36, 53
- Angels, baptism by, 146

ATH

- Anti-Jacobin Review on burial case, 251, 264
- Apollinarian baptism, 79
- Apostles, character of ministry, 14; guardians of teaching, 19; their baptisms on day of Pentecost, 34; their mission to baptize, 37; tradition of their practice, 55. *See* Commission
- Apostolical Canons, 46; on heretical baptism, 48; on the rightful minister, 49; bearing on lay baptism, 135; authority in East, 47, 268, 269
- Apostolical Constitutions, 50; on St. Philip and Ananias, 35, 36; on bishops and priests, 51, 52; deacons, 52; minor orders, 52; laymen, 52, 135; women, 51; heretics, 51
- Aquinas, *see* Thomas, St.
- Arches Court, burial cases in, 250, 254, 257
- Arcudius, on Eastern views of seventeenth century, 202
- Argyll and Isles, *see* Chinnery-Haldane, Bishop
- Arian baptism, 79, 80, 86, 91, 92, 97, 120, 132
- Arles, Councils of; I., 8, 91, 100, 293, 294; II., 119, 295; in 1260, 151, 165
- Armenians on lay baptism, 204
- Articles, Thirty-nine, on minister of sacraments, 216; on unworthiness of the minister, 104, 300
- Athanasius, St., story of youthful baptisms, 88, 119, 135, 136, 208; on heretical baptism, 77, 84

AUG

Augustine, St., of Hippo; on variety of views, 7, 99; future condition of the unbaptized, 22; on council under Agrippinus, 56; on Cyprian's views, 64, 72, 99, 103, 105; on Paulianist baptism, 77; on Council of Arles, 8, 91, 100; influence on view as to minister, 98; baptism outside the Church, 100; Christ the baptizer, 102; character of heretical baptism, 103; heresy compared with evil morals, 104; baptism ineffectual without reconciliation, 105; except in necessity, 107; reconciliation by imposition of hands, 293, 294; lay baptism, 108, 304; baptism by unbaptized, in a play, &c., 109, 142, 144, 208; summary of views, 111; Waterland on, 239; quoted, 142, 143, 204, 223, 276

Augustine, St., of Canterbury, baptisms by, 34

Auxerre, Council of, 113

BABINGTON, Bishop, at Hampton Court Conference, 210

Baldwin, Rev. E. C., book, 279; on dissenters' baptism, 308, 311; on Trullan canon, 119; on Hooker, 196; letter to, from J. W. Lea, 303; from Bishop Wordsworth, 321, 322

Bale, on Bonner's Visitation articles, 180

Balsamon, on one immersion, 79, 131

Bancroft, Bishop, at Hampton Court Conference, 34, 210

Baptism, in O. T., 30-33; of blood and desire, 23; unity of, 1, 45, 65, 228; sacramental character, 16, 301; regeneration, 65; remission of sins, 21, 66; parallel with teaching, 18, 42, 44; ineffectual outside the Church, 105-107, 120, 144, 307, 318; reserved to special seasons, 41, 112, 113, 137, 173. *See* Minister, Commission, Form, Matter

Baptisteries, 75

BIS

Barlow, Dean, at Hampton Court Conference, 210

Barrow, on power of keys, 21

Basil, St., canons of, 80-84; quoted 130, 268, 269, 276; on Cyprian's opinions as to lay baptism, 68, 82, 86; on reconciliation by unction, 294

Basle, Council of, 152

Batterson, Rev. Dr., on lay and dissenters' baptism in America, 280, 281

Baudinus, on minister, 144

Bayeux, Council of, 152, 169

Bede, on heretical baptism, 122

Bellarmino, Cardinal, parallel between baptizing and teaching, 18; on Zipporah, 28; on pagan baptism, 128; propositions on minister, 207

Bennet, 'Rights of the Clergy,' 231, 259

Benson, Archbishop, on Cyprian controversy, 73

Bernard, St., on irregular baptism, 144

Bethlehem, Council of, 200

Betts, Rev. J., baptizer of Laurence, 228

Beza and French protestants, 183, 185; on female baptism, 186

Bilson, Bishop, at Hampton Court Conference, 210

Binding and loosing, Church's power of, 6, 74, 95, 290, 301

Bingham, 'Scholastical History,' part i., 231, 260; part ii., 236, 262; 'Dissertation on Council of Nice,' 237, 262; on heretical baptism, 79; on deleted orders, 89, 100; on Council of Nicæa, 89; on story of Athanasius, 89; on Laurence, 228, 237; proposed form of reconciliation, 319

Bishops, the ordinary ministers, 2, 298, 299; baptism reserved to, at great festivals, 41, 138; the fount of authority, 40, 41, 75, 222, 298, 308, 309; Apostolical Constitutions, 51; fourth century practice, 75; early middle ages, 112; later middle ages, 137; Catechism of Council of Trent, 173; Bellarmine, 207;

BLA

CAR

Roman permission to them to decide as to rebaptism, 205; American, on lay and dissenting baptism, 280, 281; some baptized by dissenters, 280, 312
 Blackall, Bishop, and dissenters' baptism, 235, 312
 Blastar, Matthew, on heretical baptism, 130; on laymen and feigned priests, 136
 Blunt, Rev. J. H., misapplication of Augustine's argument, 105; Book of Church Law, 278
 Blunt, Rev. W., on burial cases, 253, 264
 Boniface, St., of Mayence, conditional form, 297
 Bonner, Bishop, Visitation articles, 179
 Bonosiaci, baptism by, 120, 121
 Bossuet, on tradition for lay baptism, 26, 153
 Bramhall, Archbishop, on lay baptism, 223
 Brett, Dr., anon. letter attributed to, 39; assists Laurence, 229; 'Letter,' 231, 259; 'An Inquiry,' 89, 90, 236, 260; 'Further Inquiry,' 90, 237, 262; attack on Bishop Talbot's Charge, 197, 260; on heretical baptism, 79; refutation of Bingham on deleted orders, 90; on story of Athanasius, 89; on ordination of unbaptized, 313; on dissenters' baptism, 309
 Brochmand, on Lutheran lay baptism, 202
 Brodie-Innes, Rev. J., on lay and Presbyterian baptism, 284
 Brougham, Lord, judgment in burial case, 252, 255, 264
 Bullinger, against lay baptism, 172; correspondence on, 186, 187
 Burchard, on deacons, 139
 Burgess, Bishop, on burial cases, 252, 253, 264
 Burgo, *see* De Burgo
 Burial Office, to be used for those baptized by lay churchmen, 302; refused to a dissenter, 236; case at Gloucester, 250; Kemp *v.* Wickes, 250; case at Exeter,

254; Mastin *v.* Escott, 254; Titchmarsh *v.* Chapman, 257; pamphlets on cases, 263
 Burnet, Bishop, on Dodwell, 226, 230; sermon on lay baptism, 230, 259; replies, 259, 311; baptized by dissenter, 312
 Burton, Dr., on Ananias' baptism of Saul, 36
 Butler, Bishop, baptized by dissenter, 312
 Buxtorf on circumcision by un-circumcised, 29

CANONS, Council of, 151, 168

Calvin, on Zipporah, 28; against lay baptism, 172, 207; connection with French protestants, 183, 185

Calvinists, influence of, 176, 186, 225; baptism received in Russia, 201; Bishop Forbes on, 277

Cambridge University on lay baptism, 197

Cameron, Rev. Allen, 248

Campbell, Bishop, 238, 240

Campbell, Sir J., on burial cases, 254

Canonists, on minister, 139-149, 305

Canons, Apostolical, *see* Apostolical Canons

Canterbury, Archbishops of; Augustine, 34; Theodore, 124, 126; Lanfranc, 154; Walter, 154, 161; Edmund, 139, 154, 159, 163; Langton, 162; Peckham, 155, 159, 166; Cranmer, 176; Pole, 180; Parker, 185, 186, 188; Grindal, 187; Whitgift, 191-194, 210, 233; Bancroft, 34, 210; Abbott, 196; Tenison, 232, 235; Potter, 241, 263; Hutton, 179; Secker, 312; Tait, 312; Benson, 73

Cantrell, Rev. H., Pamphlet, 261

Carthage, Councils of; under Agrippinus, 55; 5th under Cyprian, 58; 6th under Cyprian, 59; 7th under Cyprian, 61, 93, 105, 294; 1st, under Gratus.

CAR

- 92; fourth council, 94, 193, 194, 277
- Cartwright, on Zipporah, 28; Admonition to Parliament, 191; controversy with Whitgift, 191; Hooker's refutation, 195
- Casaubon, on opinion in James I.'s reign, 216, 221
- Castleman, Mr.; rebaptism of dissenter, 241, 263
- Cataphrygian baptism, 121
- Catechism of Council of Trent, 173
- Catechisms, Scotch, 244-247
- Certificate of lay baptism in India, 274
- Certification of valid baptism, *see* Inquiries
- Chalcedon, Council of, 112
- Charles I.'s baptism, 209
- Chichester, Council of, 155, 164
- Chinnery - Haldane, Bishop, of Argyll; Charges, 240, 287, 288; on Waterland, 240; on Presbyterian baptism, 283, 286; rule in diocese of Argyll and the Isles, 287; on lay baptism in necessity, 303; on holy communion as remedy of irregular baptism, 314; duty to seek remedy, 316
- Christ, the baptizer; Augustine, 102, 105; Isidore, 122; Raymond, 145; Hostiensis, 146
- Christ Church, Newgate St., Readers of, 228
- Christian Observer on Burial cases, 253, 254
- Christmas, Baptisms at, 34, 113
- Chrysostom, St., on commission to remit, 21; on baptism by priests, 76, 86
- Church, Catholic, alone has power to baptize, 55, 58, 60, 62, 65, 96; baptizes by schismatics, 100; has power to adjudicate on irregular baptism, 26, 74, 152, 160, 290, 301, 317
- Church Times, on lay and dissenting baptism, 278; letter in, 274
- Circumcision, as parallel to baptism, 27, 181; not administered by priests, 27; no analogy, 29
- Claremont, Council of, 151, 165

CON

- Clement St., of Alexandria, on heretical baptism, 46
- Collyridian baptism by women, 87
- Cologne, Council of, 151, 166
- Colonies, lay baptism in, 273, 304
- Comber, Dean, on lay baptism, 219
- Commission, The baptismal, 6; given to Apostles, 12, 96, 152, 167, 172, 173, 174, 198, 219, 221, 226, 228, 244, 245, 246, 252; terms restrictive, 16; compared with other charges, 20; parallel with teaching, 18, 42, 45, 51, 148, 191, 219; obligation of clergy to defend, 230, 323
- Common Order, Book of, 182
- Communion, Holy, as remedy for irregular baptism, 313
- Compiègne, Council of, 126
- Conditional baptism; its origin, 296; mediæval use, 157, 158, 164, 181; English Prayer Book, 214, 297; Scotch canon, 283, 284; Diocese of Argyll and Isles, 286-288; Bishop of Edinburgh on, 284, 285; Maskell on, 298; in Roman Church, 271. Its application to baptism by laymen, 303, 304, 321; by women, 305; by the unbaptized, 306; by dissenters, 11, 320-323; after baptism in parturition, 305
- Confession of faith in reconciliation, 91, 121, 292
- Confirmation; its parallel with baptism, 16, 25; baptism preceding, 287, 295, 322; as remedy for irregular baptism, 92, 139, 143, 164, 294, 318
- Constantinople, loss of, 133, General Council of, 78, 130, 132, 294; Trullan, 47, 50, 73, 81, 116, 118, 293, 294; under Nicephorus, 133; council in 1166, 130, 135, 136; in 1484, 133
- Constitutions, Apostolical, *see* Apostolical Constitutions
- Convocation, addressed by puritans against lay baptism in 1536, 176; petition in 1562, 188; debate in 1575, 178, 275;

COO

- articles of 1575, 189; protest against dissenters in 1703, 225; proceedings in 1712, 233, 289
- Cooper, Bishop, on reformed Prayer Book, 178
- Coptic Churches, on lay baptism, 204
- Cornelius, baptism of, 36
- Cornelius, Pope, and the East, 57
- Corpus Juris Canonici, 143, 145, 150; quoted, 95, 110, 127, 137, 149, 313
- Cosin, Bishop, on changes in 1604, 216; on lay baptism, 221; letter to Mr. Cordel, 221, 259
- Council, General, required to decide question of minister, 289, 290
- Councils and Synods referred to, on baptism—
- A.D. 215, Carthage, under Agrippinus, 55
- 231, Iconium, 54
- Cent. III., Synnada, 55
- 255, Carthage, V. under Cyprian, 58
- 256, Carthage, VI. under Cyprian, 59
- 256, Carthage, VII. under Cyprian, 61, 65, 93, 294
- 314, Arles I. (Arelatense), 8, 91, 100, 293, 294
- 324, Elvira (Eliberitanum), 76, 94
- 325, Nicæa, General, 77, 89, 237, 262, 293
- 348, Carthage I., under Gratus, 92
- 362, Alexandria, 293
- c. 375, Laodicea, 78, 119, 135, 294
- 381, Constantinople, General, 78, 130, 132, 294
- 398, Carthage IV., 94, 193, 194, 277
- c. 400, Rome, 114
- Cent. V., synod of St. Patrick, 123
- 441, Orange (Arausicanum), 295
- 451, Chalcedon, General, 112
- 452, Arles II. (Arelatense), 119, 295

COU

- Councils and Synods *continued*—
- A.D. 511, Orleans (Aurelianense), 115
- 517, Gerona (Gerundense), 113
- 578, Auxerre (Autissiodurensis), 113
- 585, Mâcon (Matisconense), 113
- 618, Seville II. (Hispalense), 114, 293
- 633, Toledo (Toletanum), 130
- 691, Constantinople (Trullan), 47, 50, 73, 81, 116, 118, 293, 294
- 755, Vern (Vernense), 114
- 757, Compiègne (Compendiense), 126
- Cent. IX., Constantinople, under Nicephorus, 133
- 1166, Constantinople, 130, 135, 136
- Cent. XII., Two of uncertain place (foreign), 151, 161
- Cent. XII., Paris, 151, 161
- 1195, York (Eboracense), 139, 161
- 1200, Westminster (Westmonasteriense), 139, 154, 161
- 1215, Rome (Lateran IV.), 131
- c. 1217, Salisbury (Sarun), 139, 154, 162
- 1220, Durham (Dunelmense), 139, 154, 162
- 1222, Oxford (Oxonienſe), 139, 154, 162
- 1225, Aberdeen (Aberdonense), 154, 162
- 1227, Treves (Trevirensis), 151, 162
- 1235, Rouen (Rotomagensis), 151, 163
- 1236, Place unknown (Archbishop Edmund's Constitutions), 139, 154, 163
- 1237, Coventry (Coventerense), 155, 163
- 1237, London (Londinense), 137, 155, 163
- 1237, Liège (Leodiense), 137

COU

- Councils and Synods *continued*—
 A.D. c. 1237, Place unknown (English), 139, 155, 163
 1240, Worcester (Wigornien-
 ense), 137, 155, 163
 1242, St. Andrew's, 139,
 155, 164
 1246, Chichester (Cicestren-
 se), 155, 164
 1246, Fritzlar (Fritzlarien-
 ense), 151, 164
 1247, Le Mans (Cenomanen-
 se), 151, 164
 1255, Valencia, (Valentin-
 ense), 151, 164
 c. 1255, Durham (Dunelmense), 155, 165
 c. 1257, Norwich (Norwicen-
 se), 155, 165
 1260, Arles (Arelatense),
 151, 165
 1261, Mayence or Mentz (Moguntinense), 151, 165
 1268, Claremont (Claramontense), 151, 165
 1268, London (Londinense),
 155, 165
 1277, Treves (Trevirense),
 151, 166
 1279, Reading (Redingen-
 ense), 155, 166
 1280, Cologne (Coloniense),
 151, 166
 1281, Lambeth, 156, 166
 1284, Nismes (Nemausen-
 ense), 151, 167
 1287, Exeter (Exoniense),
 156, 167
 1287, Liège (Leodiense),
 151, 168
 1289, Cahors, Rodez and
 Tulle (Cadurcense, Ruthen-
 ense et Tutelense), 151,
 168
 1298, Wurzburg (Herbi-
 polense), 152, 168
 1298, Cyprus (Nimociense),
 152, 168
 Cent. XIII., Cyprus, two
 (Nicociense), 152, 168
 c. 1300, Bayeux (Bajocen-
 se), 152, 169
 1308, Winchester (Wintonen-
 se), 156, 169

CYP

- Councils and Synods *continued*—
 A.D. 1310, Mayence (Mogun-
 tinense), 152, 169
 1311, Ravenna II. (Raven-
 nate), 152, 169
 1314, Ravenna III., 152, 170
 1341, Prague (Pragense),
 152, 170
 1355, Prague, 152, 170
 1408, Rheims (Remense),
 152, 170
 1420, Salzburg (Saltzburgen-
 se), 152, 170
 1433, Basle, 152
 1438-9, Florence (Florentin-
 ense), 131, 141, 153,
 170, 180, 207, 271
 1484, Constantinople, 133
 1547, Trent (Tridentinum),
 173, 271
 1559, Edinburgh, 181
 1629, Moscow, 201
 1666, Moscow, 201
 1672, Bethlehem, 200
 1838, Edinburgh, 283
 1863, Edinburgh, 284
 Coventry, Council of, 155, 163
 Coxe, Bishop, Baptism of dissent-
 ers in America, 281
 Cranmer, Archbishop, on lay bap-
 tism, 176
 Cruickshank, Rev. A., Incumbent
 of Muthill, 249
 Curteis, Dr., Report of Mastin *v.*
 Escott, 255, 264
 Cyprian, St.; on African custom,
 56; Epistle to Magnus, 57; to
 Numidian bishops, 58; to
 Quintus, 59; to Pope Stephen,
 59; to Pompey, 60; to Jubai-
 anus, 61; correspondence with
 Firmilian, 63; 1st council on
 baptism, 58; 2nd, 59; 3rd,
 61; arguments in the contro-
 versy, 65-70; bearing on the
 general question, 71; on reser-
 vation of baptism to priests,
 21; on divergence of practice,
 7, 59, 67; on duty of remedy-
 ing irregular baptism, 316;
 insufficiency of some rites, 294,
 296; the goodness of God, 315;
 views on lay baptism attributed
 to, by St. Basil, 68, 82; Augus-

CYP

- tine's criticisms, 64, 99, 103, 105; Lombard's, 144; decrees accepted by East, 116, 268; quoted by Forbes, 276
- Cyprian, Patriarch of Constantinople, 201
- Cyprus, Councils of, 152, 168
- Cyril, St., of Alexandria, on commission to remit, 21
- Cyril, St., of Jerusalem, on baptism by deacons, 76; on heretical baptism, 84
- Cyril V., Patriarch of Constantinople, on Western baptism, 266

DACRUS, bishop of Milan, 113

Dakers, Canon, on Bishop Forbes, 273

Daubeny, Archdeacon, pamphlet on Burial cases, 193, 252, 253, 263, 264

Deacon's Devotions, 240

Deacons; baptisms by St. Philip, 35; in Tertullian's time, 41; Apostolical Constitutions, 52, 53; in 4th cent., 75, 76; in early middle ages, 114; canons of Nicephorus, 133; Hamartolus, 135; in West, in later middle ages, 139-141, 146, 161-170 *passim*; Catechism of Council of Trent, 173; Roman Ritual, 206; Bellarmine, 207; English Prayer Book, 218, 299; Bishop Forbes, 277

Deaconesses, Apostolical Constitutions on baptism by, 52

Death, baptism in danger of, *see* Necessity

De Burgo, John; baptism by deacons, 140; by heretics, pagans, laity, 148

Decretals of Gregory, 145

Decretum of Gratian, 95, 110, 127, 137, 143, 150, 313

Devil, supposed baptism by, 146

Didymus of Alexandria, on heretical baptism, 84

Dionysius of Alexandria, 55; intervention with Popes, 63; case of unbaptized communicant, 64, 313

EAS

Dionysius of Rome, correspondence with Dionysius of Alexandria, 63

Dionysius, Bishop of Ascalon, and baptism with sand, 118

Directory of Public Worship, 183

Dissenters' baptism, of modern days, 3, 224; protest in Convocation in 1703, 225; nonjuring controversy on, 226-241, 258-263; other cases and controversies, 241, 242, 261-263; Burial cases, 250-258, 263, 264; in Scotland, 181, 242-250, 283-288; in America, 280-283; bishops baptized by, 280, 312; its difference from lay Church baptism, 224, 306-310; modern opinions in favour of validity, 275, 277, 278, 285; its doubtfulness considered, 310-312; remedies for irregularity, 11, 313-323

Dissenting minister, position of, under State Toleration Acts, 251, 255

Dodson, Sir J., counsel in Burial case, 254

Dodwell, Henry, the nonjuror, on lay baptism, 226, 230

Donatist rebaptisms, 97, 98, 99

Donatus, Irish bishop, 154

Donatus Redivivus, pamphlet and answers, 236, 262

Dositheos of Jerusalem, on heretical and Western baptism, 200; on lay baptism, 203

Doubtful baptism, remedy for, 313-323; *see* Conditional form

Dowden, Bishop, Charge, 288; on minister, 215; on canon of 1863, 284; on Presbyterian baptism, 285

Dumb person cannot baptize, 148

Duns Scotus, on minister, 147

Durham, Councils of, 139, 154, 155, 162, 165

EAST, Church of, disposed to rigidity, 9, 57, 80; influenced by the Apostolical Canons, 47, 268, 269; by character of Eastern heresy, 70; tradition of apostles,

EAS

55, 72. Heretical baptism in 4th cent., 77-86, 111; in early middle ages, 115-117; in later middle ages, 129-133; in 17th cent., 200; On modern times, 267, 269. In Western baptism, in middle ages, 130-133; in post-reformation period, 199-201; at present day, 265-268; doctrine of 'economy,' 80, 132, 201; methods of reconciliation, 294; risk of rebaptizing, 321. Baptism by deacons, 76, 114. Lay baptism, in fourth century, 86-90, 111; in early middle ages, 117-119; in later middle ages, 133-137; in post-reformation period, 201-204; at present day, 268, 269, 302. *See* Russian Church

Easter, baptisms at, by bishops, 41, 112, 113, 138; not restricted to, 155

Economy, Greek theory of, 80, 132, 201

Edessa, Church of, and baptism by bishops, 112

Edinburgh, synods at, 181, 233, 284

Edmund Rich, Archbishop of Canterbury, Constitutions of, 139, 154, 163

Edward VI., Prayer Books, 177, 178

Egbert, Archbishop, on lay baptism, 125

Elizabeth, Queen, Prayer Book of, 178; revision of Convocation articles of 1575, 190

Elvira, Council of, 76, 94

Eneratite baptism, 81

England, Church of, seasons for baptism, 137. Heretical baptism in seventh century, 122. Deacons, in middle ages, 139, 161-164; in English Prayer Book, 218, 299. Lay baptism in middle ages, 153, 159, 161-169, *passim*; at reformation, 175-198; in post-reformation times, 208-223; in modern times, 272-275. Dissenters' baptism, 224-242, 250-264, 275-279. Practical conclusions as to

FOR

remedies for irregular baptism, 290-323

Epiphanius, St., on heretical baptism, 86; by women, 87, 277

Epiphany, Baptism at, 113

Erskine, Mr., Incumbent of Muthill, 243

Erskine, Justice, and Burial case, 255

Erskine, Rev. C., and lay baptism, 273

Escott *v.* Mastin, 255

Eucharist, Celebration of, parallel with baptism, 7, 16, 24, 25

Eugenius IV., and Council of Florence, 141, 153, 170

Eunomian baptism, 79, 84, 137

Eusebius, Pope, on Roman practice in fourth century, 90

Eusebius, historian, quoted, 57, 63, 64, 293

Eutychian baptism, 292

Excommunicates, baptism by, 145, 146, 147, 151, 168; whether dissenters are, 257

Exeter, Council of, 156, 167; case of rebaptism of dissenter near, 235; burial case at, 254

FAITHFUL DEPARTED, baptized by laymen, 269, 302

Featly on James I., 216

'Fieri non debet, factum valet,' 4, 107, 197, 278

Firmilian, on reservation of baptism to priests, 21; Council of Iconium, 54; quarrel with Rome, 57; correspondence with Cyprian, 54, 63; views, 65, 67, 68, 69; opinion on lay baptism attributed to by Basil, 68, 82; quoted, 276

Fleetwood, Bishop, on lay baptism, 230, 259

Florence, Council of, 131, 141, 153, 170, 180, 207, 271

Forbes, Bishop A. P., on lay baptism in colonies, 273; on historical evidence on lay baptism, 275; on the minister, 277

Forbes, Bishop Robert, rebaptism of Presbyterians, 247

Form of baptism, necessity of, 2,

FOR

- 77, 78, 79, 85, 122, 213, 223, 292; opinion of insufficiency by an unauthorised minister, 69, 71, 85, 91, 96, 303, 308, 322; teaching of its sufficiency, with matter, 120, 121, 122, 127, 141-170, *passim*, 177, 195, 205, 232, 233, 277, 278, 280-282, 298, 308; to be taught to people, 145-170 *passim*, 180, 206; in English Prayer Book, 177, 213; doubts as to its accurate use among dissenters, 306; false form accepted by St. Bernard, 144
- Forrester, Rev. H., on American opinion, 280, 282
- Fortunatus, Epistle to, attributed to Augustine, on lay baptism, 110
- Fowler, Bishop, baptized by dissenter, 312
- France, Reformed Church of, 183-185
- France, days for baptism in, 137
- Fritslar, Council of, 151, 164
- Fulgentius Ferrandus, on heretical baptism, 122
- GABRIEL SEVERUS, on lay baptism, 204
- Gap, Protestant synod at, 185
- Gelasius, on days for baptism, 113; on deacons, 115; on lay baptism, 124; quoted, 142
- Gennadius, on heretical baptism, 122
- Gerhard, on lay baptism, among Lutherans, 202
- Germany, triple immersion in, 200
- Gerona, Council of, 113
- Glycas, on story of Moseus, 118; on canons of Nicephorus, 134, 135; on lay baptism, 135
- Gratian, Decretum, 143; its sources, 143, 150; on seasons for baptism, 137; on 4th Council of Carthage, 95, 193; on Epistle to Fortunatus, 110; on pagan baptism, 127
- Gratus, Council under, at Carthage, 92
- Greeks, canons of, 49; modern

HER

- practice, 265-271; *see* East, Church of
- Green, Bishop, dissenters' baptism in America, 280
- Gregory Nazianzen, on seasons for baptism, 113; on the minister, 87
- Gregory I., on remitting sins, 21; on heretical baptism, 121; on single immersion, 130; on reconciliation by confession of faith, 293; by unction and imposition of hands, 295
- Gregory II., on unworthy priests, 121
- Gregory III., on pagan baptism, 127
- Gregory IX., Decretals, 145
- Gregory, St., of Tours, on heretical baptism, 122
- Grimthorpe, Lord, and Dr. Hook's Dictionary, 25
- Grindal, Bishop, on female baptism, 187
- HALLEN, Rev. A. W. C., on registers, 183, 219, 244
- Hamartolus, on story of Moseus, 118; on lay baptism, 134
- Hamilton, Archbishop of St. Andrew's, Catechism, on heretical and lay baptism, 180
- Hampton Court Conference, 34, 209, 291
- Harris, Rev. Mr., Letter on dissenters' baptism, 261
- Heathen baptism, *see* Pagan
- Helvetic Confession, on female baptism, 171
- Henricus de Segusio, *see* Hostiensis
- Henry III., baptism of son by a deacon, 139
- Heretical baptism; Tertullian, 45; St. Clement, Alex., 46; Apostolical Canons, 48; Apostolical Constitutions, 51; Eastern Councils, 3rd century, 54; African practice, 55; rejected by East and Africa, 57-74. In East in 4th cent., 77-86; in early middle ages, 115-117; in later middle ages, 129-133;

HER

- in post-reformation period, 199-201; in modern times, 265-269. In West in 4th cent., 90-94; Augustine's opinion, 98-108; in early middle ages, 119-123; in later middle ages, 141-153, 168, 170; Roman Ritual, 205; Catechism of Council of Trent, 174; Modern Roman practice, 271; Archbishop Hamilton's Catechism, 180; French Protestants, 184; Hooker, 195; Bramhall, 223; Forbes, 277; treatment suggested, 299; whether dissenters' baptism is heretical, 306
- Hermann's Consultation, 177
- Hermenopulus, canons of Nicephorus, 134
- Heylin, on Articles of 1575, 190
- Hickes, Dr., Letter to author of 'Lay Baptism Invalid,' 231; on story of Athanasius, 89; on Laurence, 227: assists him, 229; on ordination of unbaptized, 313; on remedy by goodness of God, 316
- Hilary, St., on baptism of eunuch, 35
- Hilary, the Deacon (pseudo Ambrose), on baptism of Cornelius, 37; on primitive lay baptism, 38; on lay baptism in 4th cent., 95
- Hildefonsus, on deacons, 115; on lay baptism, 124
- Hill, Rev. Samuel, Pamphlet, 215, 261
- Hoadly, Bishop, on primitive lay baptism, 38
- Honorius of Autun, on lay baptism, 143
- Hook, Dr., on story of Athanasius, 89; on lay baptism, 25
- Hooker, spiritual baptism, 23; on Zipporah, 28; on heretical and lay baptism, 194
- Hooper, Bishop, on baptism by midwives, 177
- Horn, Bishop, on female baptism, 187
- Hostiensis (Henricus de Segusio), on deacons, 140; on lay and heretical baptism, 146

IVO

- Howard, Rev. G. B., on lay baptism in India, 274, 275
- Hugo, of St. Victor, on female baptism, 143
- Huguenots, 184
- Hutton, Archbishop, on English office, 179; on Hampton Court Conference, 209
- Hutton, Rev. Dr., Pamphlet on Burial case, 250, 251, 264; on reception of dissenter, 215, 319
- Hypothetical Baptism, *see* Conditional form
- IBAS, Bishop of Edessa, 112
- Iconium, Council of, 54
- Iconoclasts, Reconciliation of, 293
- Ignatius, St., on bishops' ministry, 40
- Ildefonsus, *see* Hildefonsus
- Immersion, Triple, required in East, 7, 79; treatment of Western single immersion, 130-133, 199-201, 266, 267
- Imposition of hands, in reconciliation, 90, 91, 93, 94, 120, 121, 122, 123, 293, 294, 318
- Infidels, Baptism by, 145-149, 153, 170. *See* Pagan
- Injunctions of Queen Elizabeth, 185
- Innes, Bishop George, Forty-Lesson Catechism, 245
- Innocent I., on heretical baptism, 77, 120; on reconciliation, 293, 294
- Innocent III., on baptism of self, 145
- Inquiries before reception of privately baptized child, 162-165, 168, 170, 178, 212-214, 241, 297
- Intention in baptizing; mediæval times, 144-170 *passim*; Catechism of Council of Trent, 174; Bellarmine, 208; dissenters', 309
- Irregularity and invalidity, 10
- Isidore, St., on deacons, 115, 140; on heretical baptism, 122; on lay baptism, 124; quoted, 127, 140, 142
- Ivo, Bishop of Chartres, 142

JAC

- JACOBITES, Copto- and Syro-, lay baptism, 204
- James I., baptism of, 208; at Hampton Court Conference, 209, 210, 215; opinion on lay baptism, 210, 216
- Jenner-Fust, Sir H., judgment in *Kemp v. Wickes*, 254, 318; in *Titchmarsh v. Chapman*, 257
- Jeremiah II., Patriarch of Constantinople, in correspondence with Lutherans, 199, 202
- Jeremiah III., Patriarch of Constantinople, on heretical and Calvinistic baptism, 201
- Jerome, St., on African custom after Cyprian, 64; on bishop's authority, 75; on Paulianist baptism, 78; on Luciferians and lay baptism, 97, 276
- Jest or play, baptism in, 88, 109, 142, 144, 159
- Jewish baptism; admission to covenant, 30; essential, 31; directed by Sanhedrim, 31; not analogous as to minister, 33; passage of St. Ambrose misapplied to, 93
- Jews, baptism by, 93, 142, 145-148 *passim*, 174
- John the Baptist, baptism by, 32
- John Damascene, St., on heretical baptism, 117
- John the Faster, Canon of, 117, 269
- John Moscus, story of lay baptism, 117, 135
- John VIII., Pope, on lay baptism, 142
- John of Ragusa, at Council of Basle, 152
- Jolly, Bishop, Nine-Lesson Catechism, 245
- Jubaianus, Epistle of St. Cyprian to, 61; Augustine on, 99
- KEBLE, on story of Athanasius, 88
- Kelsall, Letter to Waterland on lay baptism, 238; on female baptism, 28; on dissenters' baptism, 307
- Kemp v. Wickes*, 250, 263, 264

LAY

- Kennet, Bishop White, 227, 228, 235-237
- Keys, Power of, applied to baptism, 20, 21
- Knox's Liturgy, lay baptism, 182
- LAMBETH, Council of, 156, 166
- Lanfranc, on lay baptism, 154
- Langton, Archbishop, Council under, 162
- Laodicea, Council of, 78, 119, 135, 294
- La Roque, on vocation, 184
- Lateran Council IV., 131
- Lathbury, quoted, 226, 237, 238
- Latin baptism, *see* West, Church of
- Lauder, Mr., Baptism by, in Scotland, 243
- Laurence, St., Baptisms by, 76
- Laurence, Roger; his history, 227, 237, 240; 'Lay Baptism Invalid,' 229, 230, 237, 258, 259, 263; attacked by Burnet, Fleetwood, and Talbot, 230, 260; 'Sacerdotal Powers,' 230, 259; 'Dissenters' Baptism null and void,' 231, 260; 'Bishop of Oxford's Charge considered,' 231, 260; 'Lay Baptism Invalid,' Part II., 236, 260; 'Supplement to Lay Baptism Invalid,' 237, 262; on baptismal commission, 18, 230; on baptisms on Day of Pentecost, 34; on story of Athanasius, 89; on Optatus, 97; on insufficiency of confirmation for dissenters, 296, 318; on ordination of unbaptized, 313; on remedy by goodness of God, 316
- Lawful minister, inserted in Prayer Book, 210; its meaning, 211, 301, 303; argued in *Kemp v. Wickes*, 250, 251, 252; in American Prayer Book, 279
- Lay baptism; possible instances in N.T., 34-38; Tertullian, 41-44; Apostolical Constitutions, 51; opinion attributed by Basil to Cyprian, 68, 82, 86. In East—4th cent., 86-90; in early middle ages, 117-119; in later

LAY

middle ages, 133-137; in post-reformation period, 201-204; in modern times, 268, 269. In West—4th cent., 94-98; Augustine on, 108; misapplication of his argument to, 105; Epistle to Fortunatus, 110; in early middle ages, 124, 125; in later middle ages, 142-170. Among Protestant sects—Zuinglius, 171; Bullinger, 172; Calvin, 172; Presbyterians, 182, 183; Huguenots, 183-185; Lutherans, 202. In Roman Church—Catechism of Council of Trent, 174; Bellarmine, 207; modern usage, 272. In England—Reformers, 175-177; Prayer Book, 177, 178, 208-216, 217; Puritan opposition to, 185-194, 198; Defence of by Whitgift, Hooker, Abbott, &c., 191-197; Opinions of English divines of 17th cent., 219-223; case of in 17th cent., 218; controversy of nonjurors, &c., on lay baptism and dissenting baptism, 226-242, 258-263; Burial cases, 250-258, 263, 264; in modern times, 272; in colonies, 273-275; opinions of theologians, 275-279. Scotland—Hamilton's Catechism, 181; 18th cent., 243; in modern times, 283-288. America, opinion in, 279-283. Practical conclusion on lay Church baptism, 300-305; on dissenters' baptism, 306-323. *See* Dissenters' Baptism; Women; Midwives; East, Church of; West, Church of; Unbaptized Lay priesthood, 15, 300
 Lea, J. W., on lay baptism, 303
 Le Mans, Council of, 151, 164
 Lendrum, Rev. A., on dissenters' baptism, 249
 Leo, St., on seasons for baptism, 113; on heretical baptism, 120; on reconciliation by imposition of hands, 293, 294
 Leslie, Charles, nonjuror; on lay baptism, 227; on remedy by God's goodness, 315

MAR

Leslie, Rev. J., Incumbent of Muthill, 244
 Leunclavius, on canons of Nicephorus, 134
 Liddon, Canon, on dissenting baptism, 277
 Liège, Councils of, 137, 151, 168
 Lindsay, David, baptizer of Charles I., 209
 Lombard, Peter; on 4th Council of Carthage, 95; on deacons, 140; on laymen, 144
 London, Councils of, 137, 155, 163, 165. *See* Lambeth, Westminster
 Lucas Chrysoberges, Patriarch of Constantinople, on Mahometan baptism, 130
 Luciferian baptism, 97
 Lushington, Dr., burial case, 255
 Lutheran correspondence with Greeks, 199, 202; lay baptism, 202
 Lyndwood; 'Provinciale,' 148, 159; on baptism by priests, 138; deacons, 141; lay, heretical, and pagan, 149; during birth, 305
 Lyons, Protestant synod of, 184
 MACEDONIAN baptism, 79, 80, 132
 Mâcon, Council of, 113
 Macraius, Sergius, on Western baptism, 266
 Madan, Bishop Spencer, and Burial case, 252
 Magnus, Cyprian's epistle to, 57
 Mahometan baptism, 130
 Maimonides, on Jewish baptism, 32
 Manchester, case at, of baptizing dissenter, 236
 Manichee baptism, 81
 Mant, Bishop, on lay baptism, 252
 Manuel, Bishop of Heracleon, 135
 Marcellus, Pope, and baptisteries at Rome, 76
 Marcionite baptism, 81, 87, 277
 Mark of Ephesus at Council of Florence, 131
 Marriage compared with baptism, 5, 195; rights of not affected by

MAR

- baptism of own child, 142, 148, 154, 161, 162, 169, 206, 302
- Marshall, Nathaniel, on acts of Council of Carthage, 62, 262; on bishops in heretical sects, 69; on Pope Stephen, 70; on Church authority to confirm irregular baptism, 317; on conditional baptism, 321
- Martene, quoted, 75, 113, 138, 141, 293, 295, 297
- Mary, Queen, Baptism in reign of, 179
- Maskell, Rev. W., 'Holy Baptism,' 264; on St. Philip's baptisms, 36; on burial cases, 256; on conditional form, 298; on baptism during birth, 305
- Mastin *v.* Escott, 254, 264
- Matter of baptism; necessity and sufficiency apart from minister, 2, 152, 195, 205, 232, 233, 277, 278, 280, 292, 298; directions to use water, 158, 161-170 *passim*, 177, 180, 206; doubts as to matter in Presbyterian baptism, 306. *Compare* Form of baptism, Immersion
- Matthew, Patriarch of Alexandria, on Western baptism, 266
- Mayence, Councils of, 151, 152, 165, 169
- Meletius, the Confessor, on one immersion, 131
- Metrophanes Critopulus, Patriarch of Constantinople, 203
- Michael Cerularius, Patriarch of Constantinople, on Western baptism, 130
- Michael Palæologus, on one immersion, 131
- Midwives, baptism by; schoolmen and canonists, 145-149; mediæval canons, 151-170 *passim*; Protestant sects, 171, 182, 185; Puritans, 177, 185-198; English Prayer Book, 179; Licence to, 186; Hampton Court Conference, 209, 216; in Queen Mary's reign, 180; Roman Ritual, 206; modern East, 203; Russia, 271
- Milan, Baptism discipline at, 93, 113

NES

- Milbourn, Luke, Pamphlet, 260
- Millenary Petition, Replies to, 197
- Minister of baptism; the general subject, 2, 7, 8, 10, 290. *See* East, West, Rome, England, Scotland, America, Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Minor orders, Heretical, Schismatical, Lay, Women, Midwives, Pagan, Unbaptized
- Ministry, Representative view of, 14
- Minor orders, baptism by; Apostolical Constitutions, 52; St. Raymond, 145, 146; Catechism of Council of Trent, 174; Roman Ritual, 206
- Mirk's 'Instructions,' on lay baptism, 158
- Moberly, Bishop, representative view of ministry, 14
- Monks, Baptism by, 133, 146
- Monothelites, 293
- Montague, Dean, on Hampton Court Conference, 209, 210
- Montanist baptism, 54, 78, 79, 81, 121
- Moody, Rev. J., Pamphlet, 263
- Moore, Bishop, baptized by dissenter, 312
- Morinus quoted, 293, 295
- Moscow, Councils of, 201
- Moscu, *see* John Moscu
- Muthill, Register of, 243, 249
- Myrk, *see* Mirk
- NAME of Blessed Trinity, in baptism, *see* Form
- Name of child, whether to be given by lay baptizer, 164, 165, 168, 169
- Necessity, Plea of, for lay baptism, 22, 39, 172, 176, 194, 220; Tertullian on, 42; Augustine on, 107, 110; in Scotland, 243; in colonies, 273; what constitutes, 149, 301; duty of laymen in, 302-305. *See* Lay baptism
- Negroes, Society for conversion of, on dissenters' baptism, 242
- Nestorians, on lay baptism, 204; their own baptisms, 292

NEW

- New Testament, instances of baptism in, 34-37
- Nicæa, Council of, 77, 89, 237, 262, 293
- Nicene Creed, on one baptism, 1
- Nicephorus, Canons of, 133, 204, 268
- Nicephorus, the historian, on baptism by unbaptized, 137
- Nicetas Chroniates, on heretical baptism, 129
- Nicholas I., Pope, on pagan baptism, 142
- Nicholl, Sir J., judgment in *Kemp v. Wickes*, 250, 263; attacks on, 250, 263, 264
- Nicodemus, on Greek canons, 268
- Nicosia, Council of, 152, 168
- Nimosia, Council of, 152, 168
- Nonjurors; conjecture as to primitive lay baptism, 38; Dodwell, 226; Leslie, 227, 315; Laurence, 227, 236, 237; Hickes, 231; Brett, 231, 236; Wheatly, 220, 237; Deacon, 240; controversy on baptism, 226-241
- Norwich, Council of, 155, 165
- Novatians, 57, 58, 78, 79, 81, 82, 89, 92, 120
- Nowel, Dean, petition in Convocation on lay baptism, 188
- Odo, Archbishop of Paris, Constitutions of, 151, 161
- Oiconomos, Constantine, quoted, 131-133, 201, 267
- Old Testament analogies; circumcision, 27-30; baptism, 30-33
- One baptism, the, 1, 45, 55, 62, 65, 102, 228
- One immersion, *see* Immersion
- Optatus, St., on heretical baptism, 93; on lay baptism, 96
- Orange, Council of, 295
- Orders, Holy; supposed ground of conciliar decrees, 79; indelibility of, 79, 90, 101, 104, 299. *See* Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Lay Baptism
- Ordinal, Roman and Sarum, on deacons, 141; Preface to English, 216

PEC

- Ordination, parallel to baptism, 16, 25; possibility of for unbaptized, 313
- Orleans, Council of, 115
- Orthodoxus, pamphlet by, on heretical baptism, 263
- Otho, Legatine Constitutions of, 155, 163
- Othobon, Legatine Constitutions of, 155, 165
- Oxenham, Rev. F. N., on lay baptism, 288
- Oxford, Council of, 139, 154, 162
- Oxford, Earl of, suggests Queen's letter on lay baptism, 235
- Oxford, University of, on lay baptism, 197
- PACIAN, St., on power of remission, 21; on heretical baptism, 94; on lay baptism, 95
- Pagan baptism; Jerome, 98; Augustine, 109, 110; in early middle ages, 127; Decretum, 143; schoolmen and canonists, 145-150 *passim*, 170; possibility of now, 305. *See* Jews, Mahometan
- Parents, baptism by; schoolmen and canonists, 145-149 *passim*; mediæval councils, 151-170 *passim*; Roman Ritual, 206; in modern East, 268; duty in necessity, 302
- Paris, Council of, 151, 161; Protestant synod at, 183
- Paris, Matthew, on baptism of Henry III.'s son, 139
- Parker, Archbishop, 185, 186, 188
- Parmenian, Augustine's treatise against, 109
- Parthenius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, on Western baptism, 266
- Patrick, St., canons of, 123
- Paul, St., baptism by Ananias, 36; his own baptisms, 37; spurious Acts of Paul and Thecla, 44
- Paul V., Roman Ritual, 205
- Paulianists, 77, 116, 119
- Pead, Eleanor, licence to baptize, 186
- Peckham, Archbishop, 155, 159, 166

PED

- Πηδάλιον, quoted, 49, 80, 117, 132-134, 268, 269
 Pelliccia, quoted, 138
 Penance, reconciliation by, 90, 92, 294
 Pentecost, baptisms on day of, 34; by bishops at, 41, 113, 138; not restricted to, 155
 Pepuzians, *see* Montanists
 Perkins, W., on Zipporah, 28; on lay baptism, 198
 Peter, St., keys used in baptism, 20; baptism of Cornelius, 36
 Petilian, Augustine's treatise against, 102, 105
 Petrie, Bishop, Nine-Lesson Catechism, 245
 Philalethes, Letter by, 39, 241, 263
 Philaretus, Patriarch, 201
 Philemon and Dionysius of Alexandria, 63
 Philip, St., baptisms by, 35, 53
 Phillimore, Dr., counsel in burial case, 254; reports, 251, 263
 Phillimore, W. G. F., Book on Church Law, on lay baptism, 278
 Phillipotts, Bishop, on burial cases, 254-256, 264; on confirmation as remedy of irregular baptism, 318
 Photinian baptism, 78, 119
 Phrygian baptism, 78, 84
 Plaisas, Dr., on modern Greek practice, 269
 Poitiers, Protestant synod at, 184
 Pole, Cardinal, decree and Visitation articles, on lay baptism, 180
 Polianus, Bishop of Milevum, on heretical baptism, 93
 Pompey, Cyprian's epistle to, 60
 Pontius on Pope Xystus, 64
 Poore, Bishop, synod under, 154, 162
 Popes; Cornelius, 57; Stephen, 57-63, 66, 70, 71, 293; Xystus II., 63; Marcellus, 76; Eusebius, 90; Siricius, 92, 113, 293, 294; Innocent I., 77, 120, 293, 294; Leo I., 113, 120, 293, 294; Gelasius, 113, 115, 124, 142; Gregory I., 21, 121, 130, 293, 295; Sergius I., 127; Gre-

PRI

- gory II., 121; Gregory III., 127; Zachary, 121; Nicholas I., 142; John VIII., 142; Urban II., 142; Innocent III., 145; Gregory IX., 145; Eugenius IV., 141, 153, 170; Paul V., 205
 Porteus, Bishop, 242
 Potter, Bishop, rebaptism of Presbyterian, 241; letter to, 263
 Power, delegated to apostles, 16; not to act of baptizing, 17
 Prague, Councils of, 152, 170
 Prayer Book, of 1549, 177; of 1552 and 1559, 178, 179; of 1604, 208-216; of 1661, 217; protests about in Convocation in 1703, 225; on conditional form, 297, 320-323. *See* Private baptism, office for
 Preaching, parallel with baptism, *see* Commission
 Presbyterians, on lay baptism, 182, 183; James I. and baptism, 208; one rebaptized by Wesley, 241; baptism of, rejected in Scotland, 244; by Bishop R. Forbes, 247; in later times, 248; Scotch canons on, 283, 284; Scotch bishops on, 283, 284; Bishop Chinnery-Haldane in diocese of Argyll and Isles, 286-288; in America, 281
 Priest, as minister of baptism, 2; Tertullian, 40, 41; Apostolical Constitutions, 51, 52; in 4th cent., 75, 76, 86; in early middle ages, 113; in later middle ages, 138, 145-170 *passim*; Council of Florence, 170; Catechism of Council of Trent, 173; Roman Ritual, 206; Bellarmine, 207; in East, 204; to be summoned, 302; jurisdiction, 298; baptism by pretended, 125, 135, 136, 235, 241, 269
 Priesthood of clergy and of laity, 15, 300
 Private baptism, objected to by puritans, 176, 185, 188; office for, 177, 179, 187, 189, 192; discussed at Hampton Court, 209, 291
 Privy Council judgment on burial case, 255

PUP

- Pupilla Oculi, *see* De Burgo
 Puritans; objection to lay baptism, 176, 198; correspondence with Protestant reformers, 186; addresses to Convocation, 176, 188, 189; efforts with Whitgift, 191-194; with James I., 209; on same side as high churchmen of succeeding period, 225
 Pusey, Dr., on African practice, 64; on Benedictine view of Athanasius' rejection of heretical baptism, 86; on St. Ambrose, 93; recommendation of conditional baptism, 321
- QUARTERLY REVIEW, on burial case, 252, 264
 Quartodeciman baptism, 78, 79
 Quintilla, Baptism by, 44
 Quintillian baptism by women, 87
 Quintus, Cyprian's epistle to, 59
- RABBIS, on circumcision, 28; on baptism, 30-33
 Ravenna, Councils of, 152, 169, 170
 Raymond, St., on minister, 145
 Read, Benjamin, Baptism of, 235, 261; pamphlets, 235, 261, 262
 Readers of Christ Church, Newgate St., 228
 Reading, Council of, 155, 166
 Rebaptism, by Donatists, 97-99; by Greeks, of Westerns, 131-133, 199-201, 265-267, 321; by Roman Church, 271; so-called, forbidden, 123, 148, 151, 157, 158, 166, 167, 178, 179, 221; Cyprian's denial of term for baptizing heretics, 67; Hooker on, 195; requisite after invalid baptism, 123, 129, 131, 292
 Reception, Office for in Prayer Book, 215. *See* Inquiries
 Reconciliation, necessity for after irregular baptism, 106, 120, 121, 317, 319. *See* Remedies
 Reformed Church of France, 183-185
 Registers, Muthill, 243, 249; Aradoul, 248; St. Mary's Wool-

SAC

- church, 218; Christ Church, Newgate St., 229
 Remedies for irregular baptism; *see* Rebaptism, Confession of Faith, Penance, Imposition of hands, Unction, Confirmation, Communion, Conditional baptism
 Rheims, Council of, 152, 170
 Rich, Archbishop, 139, 154, 159, 163
 Riley, Mr. A., on Greek view of Western baptism, 267
 Riper years, Office for baptism of, 217; who may baptize, 299
 Ritual, Roman, on heretical baptism, 205; on lay, 206; conditional form, 297; on baptism during birth, 305; title of minister, 212
 Rochelle, Protestant synods of, 185
 Rodez, Council of, 151, 168
 Romanoff, on Russian Usage, 271
 Rome, Councils of, 114, 131; Baptisteries at, 75
 Rome, Church of, lax usage in third century, 57, 59, 73, 160; contest with the East, 57-64, 70, 71, 81; in 4th cent., 90; in early middle ages, 120, 121, 127; later middle ages, 133, 141, 143; Trent, 173; Ritual, 205, 206, 212, 297, 305; Modern practice, 271, 276, 303, 321. *See* West, Church of
 Rouen, Council of, 151, 163
 Rufinus, on contest between Rome and East, 57; on story of Athanasius, 88
 Rupert of Deutz, on heretical baptism, 143
 Russian Church; treatment of Western baptism, 201, 270; lay baptism, 270, 302
- SABBATIAN baptism, 79
 Sabellian baptism, 79
 Sacraments, require apostolic ministry, 15, 24, 301; only to be had in the Church, 58, 101, 103; all open to lay ministration if baptism is, 25, 66, 220; bap-

SAD

- tism a sacrament, 16, 301; each its own grace, 314
- Sadler, Rev. Preb., on apostolic commission, 19
- St. Andrew's, Council of, 139, 155, 164
- St. Maixant, Protestant synod at, 184
- St. Mary's Woolchurch, lay baptism registered at, 218
- Salisbury, Council of, 139, 154, 162
- Salzburg, Council of, 152, 170
- Samosatenes, 77
- Sanctification in the Law implies baptism, 30
- Sanderson, Bishop, on female baptism, 219
- Sandys, Bishop, on female baptism, 188
- Sanhedrim, directed Jewish baptism, 31
- Sarum Offices, on deacons, 141; on lay baptism, 156; foundation of present office, 177
- Satan, supposed baptism by, 146
- Sathas, M., 266
- Schismatical baptism; the Cyprian controversy, 58, 68; St. Basil's canons, 81, 130; St. Augustine, 101-107; schoolmen and canonists, 145-150 *passim*; mediæval councils, 152, 153; English treatment of, 299. *See* Remedies
- Schoolmen, 139-149, 305
- Scotland, Church of; mediæval canons on minister, 139, 154, 155, 162, 164; Catechism of Archbishop Hamilton, 180; Treatment of Protestant baptism at Reformation, 181; Catechisms of 18th cent., 244-247; lay baptism in, 243; re-baptism of Presbyterians, 244, 247-249; canon of 1838 and 1863, 283, 284; Recent controversies, 285-288
- Scott, Rev. W., edition of Laurence, 263, 264
- Scottish Guardian, 273, 285, 287, 288
- Scotus, *see* Duns
- Seal, Simile of, 87, 195

TAL

- Secker, Archbishop, baptized by dissenter, 312
- Self, baptism by, 145, 167
- Sergius I., Pope, on baptism by unbaptized, 127
- Seville, Council of, 114, 293
- Sharp, Archbishop, on lay baptism, 233
- Sharp, Archdeacon, 263
- Shaw, Ferdinando, Pamphlet, 261
- Silas, St., baptisms by, 37
- Simon, Bishop of Thessalonica, on lay baptism, 136
- Sinai, baptism of Jews at, 30
- Siricius, Pope, on days for baptism, 113; on reconciliation of heretics, 92, 293, 294
- Skinner, Bishop John, Catechism, 245
- Skinner, Mr., baptized by Bishop R. Forbes, 248
- Smirnoff, Rev. E., on Russian discipline, 271
- Smith, Mr. Farquhar, on lay baptism in Scotland, 243
- Socrates, story of Athanasius, 88
- Southgate, Bishop, rebaptized, 280
- Sozomen, story of Athanasius, 88
- Sparrow, Bishop, on English office, 222
- Sprinkling in schism, in Scotland, 248-250, 283
- Stephen, Pope; quarrel with East, 57; dispute with Africa, 59-63; approached by Dionysius, 63; his arguments and conduct, 66, 70, 71; on reconciliation of heretics, 293
- Stephens, A. J., burial cases, 257, 264
- Stogden, H., pamphlet, 235, 262
- Strabo, Walafrid, on baptism in necessity, 153
- Strype, quoted, 186, 189, 190
- Synnada, Council of, 55
- Syrian Churches, lay baptism in, 204
- Tait, Archbishop, baptized by dissenter, 312
- Talbot, Bishop, on lay baptism, 230; answered by Laurence and Brett, 231, 260

TAL

- Talmud on Jewish baptism, 30-32
 Taylor, Bishop Jeremy, on Western laxity, 9; on keys to apostles, 20; on unbaptized infants, 23; on baptisms on day of Pentecost, 34; on baptism of Cornelius 37; on Simon of Thessalonica, 136; on lay baptism, 220
 Teaching, parallel with baptism, *see* Commission
 Tenison, Archbishop, on lay baptism, 232, 235
 Terrot, Bishop, on Presbyterian baptism, 285
 Tertullian, on bishops, 41; priests and deacons, 41; laymen, 41, 300; heretics, 45; his lost treatise, 46; quoted, 222, 276
 Thecla, Acts of Paul and, 44
 Theodore, Archbishop, on lay baptism, 124; on baptism by unbaptized, 126
 Theodore Scutariota, on lay baptism, 136
 Theodore Studites, on heretical baptism, 117; on lay baptism, 119
 Theodoret, on deacons, 114
 Thomas, St., Aquinas, on baptism by priests, 138, 147; deacons, 76, 140, 147; pagans, 127, 147; laymen and women, and unbaptized, 147; on intention, 310
 Thorndike, on lay baptism, 221
 Timotheus, presbyter, on heretical baptism, 115
 Titchmarsh *v.* Chapman, 257
 Toledo, Council of, 130
 Torry, Bishop, on Presbyterian baptism, 249; conditional baptism, 287
 Tradition applied to lay baptism, 26, 152, 176, 193
 Trent, Council of, on baptism, 173, 271; Catechism of, on minister, 173
 Treves, Councils of, 151, 162, 166
 Triple immersion, *see* Immersion
 Tripp, Rev. R., and burial case, 254
 Trullo, Council in, A.D. 691, on Apostolical Canons, &c., 47, 50,

WAL

- 81, 116, 118; on reconciliation, 293, 294; Council in 1166, 130, 135, 136
 Tulle, Council of, 151, 168
 Turner, Dr. John, pamphlets, 260, 261
 Tyndale, on lay baptism, 175
 UNBAPTIZED, baptism by; St. Jerome, 98; St. Augustine, 109, 110; Council at Compiègne, 126; Nicephorus, 136; Nicholas I., 142; Decretum, 144; Aquinas, 147; De Burgo, 148; Lyndwood, 149; Bellarmine, 207; suggested treatment, 305. Ordination of unbaptized invalid, 313; possibility of salvation of the unbaptized, 22, 67, 172, 220
 Unction, reception by, 116, 120-122, 129-131, 143, 157, 164, 170, 200, 201, 266, 294
 Unitarian baptism, 254, 281
 Unity of baptism, 1, 45, 55, 62, 65, 102, 228
 Unworthiness of minister, 104, 172, 299
 Ussher, Archbishop, on lay baptism, 219
 VALENCIA, Council of, 151, 164
 Valentinian baptism, 81
 Validity not identical with efficacy, 105; doubtful cases, 292, 300-323
 Van Mildert's publication of Waterland's and Kelsall's letters, 238, 240, 262
 Vern, Council of, 114
 Vincent of Lerins, on Agrippinus and Council of Carthage, 56; on Cyprian controversy, 72
 Visitation articles of Bonner and Pole, 179, 180
 Vitre, Protestant synod at, 184
 WALLACE, Adam, tried for baptizing own child, 181
 Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury, 154, 161

WAR

- Warburton, Bishop, on baptism by pretended priest, 241
- Warren, Rev. C., on burial cases, 264; on remedy of confirmation, 318
- Waterland, Dr., Letters in reply to Kelsall, 238, 240, 262; on the saying 'Fieri non debet, factum valet,' 5; on lay baptism, 24; on baptism of Cornelius, 37; on ordination of unbaptized, 313; on Bingham and Laurence, 237
- Wesley, John, rebaptizes a Presbyterian, 241
- Wesleyan baptism, 242, 254, 256
- West, Church of; disposition to laxity, 9, 57, 76, 92; its heresies, 70; Western critics on Cyprian controversy, 72. On heretical baptism, 4th cent., 90-94; Augustine's views, 99-108, 111; in early middle ages, 119-123; in later middle ages, 137-153 *passim*. On lay baptism, 4th cent., 94-98; Augustine's views, 108-111; in early middle ages, 124; in later middle ages, 137-170 *passim*. Forms of reconciliation, 292-323. Treatment of baptism by East, 130-133, 199-201, 265-268. On baptism by bishops, priests, and deacons, 41, 75-77, 112-115, 137-141. *See also* Rome, England, Scotland, America
- Westcott, Canon, on representative view of ministry, 14
- Westminster, Council of, 139, 154, 161
- Wheatly, Commentary on Prayer Book, 263; borrows from Comber, 220; association with Laurence, 237
- Whipple, Bishop, on lay and dissenters' baptism, 280-282
- White Crow, The, pamphlet, 259
- Whitgift, Archbishop, on Zipporah, 28; MS. of articles of 1575, 189; addressed by puritans, 193; controversy with Cartwright, 191; at Hampton Court Conference, 210; quoted by bishops in Convocation, 233

XAV

- Wiburn, on female baptism in England, 187
- Wickes, Rev. J. W., Burial case, 250
- Wilkinson, Rev. J., case at Exeter, 254
- Wilson, Bishop, on minister, 221
- Winchester, Council of, 156, 169
- Withers, on female baptism in England, 187
- Withers, Mr., Pamphlet, 261
- Women, Baptism by; analogy of Zipporah, 28; in Tertullian, 44; Apostolical Constitutions, 51, 52; Epiphanius, 87; 4th Council of Carthage, 94, 277. In East, 9th cent., 134; 17th cent., 203, 204. In West, in early middle ages, 124; in later middle ages, schoolmen and canonists, 143-150; mediæval councils, 151-170 *passim*. Protestants of reformation, Zuinglius, 171; Helvetic Confession, 171; Bullinger, 172; Calvin, 172; French protestants, 185; Presbyterians, 182. Roman Church, Catechism of Council of Trent, 174; Ritual, 206; Bellarmine, 207. English Church, Reformers, 175-179; Hamilton's Catechism in Scotland, 181; controversies of puritans, and in Convocation, 185-198; Hampton Court Conference, 209, 210; Sanderson, 219; Ussher, 219; Taylor, 220; Cosin, 221; duty at present day, 304. *See* Midwives
- Worcester, Council of, 137, 155, 163
- Wordsworth, Bishop, of Lincoln, on lay and dissenters' baptism, 321; second confirmation after Church baptism, 322
- Wurzburg, Council of, 152, 168
- Wynford, Lord, Burial case, 255
- XANTHE, Archbishop of, on Western baptism, 267
- Xavier, St. Francis, baptisms by, 34

XYS

Xystus, Pope, and Dionysius of
Alexandria, 63

YORK, Council of, 139, 161; Ex-
cerptions of Egbert, 125

ZUI

ZACHARY, Pope, on heretical bap-
tism, 121

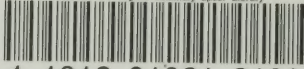
Zipporah and circumcision, 28

Zonaras, on single immersion,
131

Zuinglius, on lay baptism, 171



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